GOVERNMENT OF THE
CENTRAL PROVINCES AND BERAR

ANNUAL REPORT

ON THE

MENTAL HOSPITAL, NAGPUR

IN THE

CENTRAL PROVINCES & BERAR

FOR THE YEAR

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INTRODUCTION

1. **Appointment of Committee.**—The Committee was established by the following Resolution:—

RESOLUTION.

No. 5505-A., dated the 5th December, 1944.

The Governor is pleased to constitute a Committee to be designated as the Bengal Administration Enquiry Committee on the terms of reference as set out below—

1. To assess the work to be done by the Government of Bengal both now and in the foreseeable future in order to ensure the efficient government of the Province of Bengal on modern and progressive lines.

2. To report to what extent the existing administrative machine is adequate in structure, extent and quality, and to recommend methods of improving it at all levels to render it adequate, for the efficient discharge of that work.

3. In particular to examine—

(*a*) the suitability of the present Territorial jurisdictions (*e.g.*, Divisions, Districts, Subdivisions, Thanas and Circles);

(*b*) the extent to which, and the directions in which local Self-Governing Institutions may be utilised as an efficient adjunct to the administration with special reference to public health;

(*c*) the desirability of employing technical personnel and its co-ordination with the existing structure of district administration;

(*d*) sources and systems of recruitment to, and conditions of employment of, the public services with a view to:

(*i*) securing the best men with due regard to the declared policy of Government in respect of Communal reservations, and

(*ii*) precluding discontent, irresponsibility and temptation to corruption.

4. Generally to make recommendations for the improvement of the administration.

The constitution of the Committee shall be as follows:—

CHAIRMAN.

Sir Archibald Rowlands, K.C.B., M.B.E.

MEMBERS.

Sir H. M. Hood, K.C.I.E., C.S.I., I.C.S.
Mr. R. L. Walker, C.I.E., I.C.S.
Khan Bahadur M. A. Momin, C.I.E., M.L.C.
Rai Debendra Mohan Bhattacharyya Bahadur.

ASSOCIATE MEMBER.

Mr. N. Baliol Scott.

SECRETARY.

Mr. J. L. Llewellyn, O.B.E., I.C.S.

ORDER.—Ordered that the resolution be published in the *Calcutta Gazette* and that copies be forwarded to the members of the Committee and the Departments of the Secretariat.

By order of the Governor,

Sd. H. S. E. STEVENS,

Chief Secretary to the Government of Bengal.

Although the point was not specifically mentioned in the terms of reference, it was understood that we would try and render a report within five months. We started work on the 1st November, although it was not until a week or two later that our numbers were complete.

2. **Scope of Enquiry.**—We have conceived our task as that of a machinery of Government committee and as not requiring us to concern ourselves with questions of policy. As, however, was inevitable in such a wide field, we have found it impossible to avoid entirely questions of policy, particularly where these affect administrative efficiency or practicability. The time at our disposal being so short to cover such a wide reference, we have for the most part avoided going into matters of detail, although in the course of our enquiry, we have come across questions of detail with which we have thought it desirable to deal. Broadly, therefore, we have confined ourselves to questions of principle, e.g., while on the organisation side we have devoted considerable attention to the structure of the Government machine, both at Headquarters and in the Districts we have not attempted to go into the detailed organisation o

individual departments. Similarly, on the question of conditions of service, we have not attempted to suggest scales of pay for the numerous grades and classes of Government servants, but we have generally limited ourselves to suggesting the broad principles which in our view should determine what those scales should be.

3. **The Committee's Procedure.**—We visited four Districts, and among the Establishments and Local Bodies which we inspected were District and Subdivisional Offices, District Boards, Municipalities, Panchayati Unions and Union Boards. All of us visited some, and some of us visited most, of the Departments of the Secretariat and Attached Offices. We took oral evidence from over 100 witnesses, in addition to which we have received a large volume of written evidence. Among those who helped us in this way were officers of the Government of Bengal, Mr. Justice Roxburgh, Mr. Justice Ellis, the Accountant-General of Bengal, representatives of the commercial community, the Bengal Association of District Board Chairmen, the All-Bengal Municipal Association and Associations representing the various categories of public servants in the Province. We also had the advantage of oral or written evidence about the system of administration in some of the other Provinces in India and in the largest Indian State. We were fortunate too in being able to interview Professor Fisher of Cambridge University and Mr. John Galvin of the Far Eastern Bureau of the British Ministry of Information, who, through the courtesy of its Director—Mr. C. E. Sayers—came to Calcutta to advise the Government on the publicity arrangements in Bengal.

4. **Acknowledgments.**—We should like to express our thanks to all who have helped us by oral or written evidence. We are very sensible of the extra burden which our enquiry has imposed on Government officers at a time of unusual strain.

We are very grateful to the Honourable Speaker of the Bengal Legislative Assembly for his courtesy in placing accommodation at our disposal in the Assembly building for the first few weeks of our enquiry, and to His Highness the Maharajah of Tripura for so kindly allowing the use of several rooms in Tripura House for the remaining period of our investigation. Lastly, we wish to place on record our high appreciation of the services rendered to us by our Secretary—Mr. J. L. Llewellyn. This is no common form tribute. His wide experience of District work, his wise judgment and his unflagging zeal, both during the course of our enquiry and in the preparation of this Report, have placed us under a deep obligation which we are very glad to have the opportunity of acknowledging.

CHAPTER I

The Background

5. More than one witness who appeared before us observed that for years Bengal had been run on the cheap, and it must be admitted that there is much to support this view. The ratio of the higher administrative cadres to the population is, we believe, lower in Bengal than in any other Province in India except Orissa.

6. Figures have been produced to us to show that ever since 1900 the *per capita* expenditure on Government in Bengal has been well below that of the four other major Provinces. This is not only true of the total expenditure but also of the expenditure on social services. The plain fact is that, in the past, Bengal has not been so much badly administered as under-administered.

7. Apart from the special difficulties arising from the war, which has hit Bengal more severely than any other Province, except possibly Assam, it has laboured under special handicaps of its own. There is hardly a Province in India which suffers from such inadequate communications. Its road and rail communications are meagre in the extreme and the Province is intersected by a number of large rivers which make through communications by road impossible. The principal means of communication over a large area is by country boats which are in certain seasons unreliable and at all seasons very slow.

8. Bengal contains a number of Districts which are quite unmanageable from the point of view of size, Mymensingh, for example, containing some 6 million inhabitants.

9. Another factor which has hampered resolute administration since the coming of Provincial Autonomy has been the unstable support at the command of the Government, which has had to abstain from many measures which were desirable in order to escape defeat on the floor of the House.

10. The main handicap, however, under which Bengal has laboured for a century-and-a-half is the absence of the Revenue staff which exists in every other Province where the land is not permanently settled. This Revenue staff provides a representative of Government right down into the villages with a hierarchy of superior staffs through Kanungos, Naib Tahsildars and Tahsildars right up to the District Headquarters. These Revenue staffs, although established primarily for Revenue purposes, are available as a source of information and as a means of carrying out executive orders for all branches of Government in the rural areas. An attempt was made as a result of the Bengal Administrative Committee, 1913-14, to remedy this defect by the appointment of Circle Officers, but the area of jurisdiction of these Circle Officers is so large that the defect is only very partially remedied. The other means of communicating information or advice to the villagers, viz., the Press, the radio or the cinema, are also almost completely lacking.

CHAPTER II

The Tasks Ahead

11. We have been asked by our terms of reference to assess the work to be done in Bengal, both now and in the foreseeable future. This presupposes a statement of Government's policy, but our terms of reference provide us with no guidance as to the Government's post-war plans. In the absence of any such indication, we endeavoured to obtain from the several Departments a statement of what they had in mind for the post-war period. The replies we received were, with exceptions, not very encouraging or very helpful. It appears that, for the most part, the plans are far from being completely digested and have been drawn up in separate compartments without any attempt to relate them to the schemes of other Departments and without any reference to the financial or technical resources likely to be available.

12. What is, however, clear is that the main emphasis in the activities of Government henceforward will be in the development field and directed to the full utilisation of the material and human resources of the Province.

13. The most urgent requirement is to work out as soon as possible an ordered plan, properly articulated as to its constituent parts and phased as to its rate of achievement within the limits of technical and financial practicability. Although we shall have something to say later on in our Report about the desirability of a less inflexible system of financial control, we believe that all the Government's plans for post-war development will be frustrated unless they pay due regard to the limits which financial resources will necessarily impose. The position at present seems to be that, in spite of the fact that the Government expect, both in the current year and next year, heavy Budget deficits, they are going ahead with a number of new schemes, short term and long term, involving large capital and recurring expenditure and we cannot help feeling that liabilities are being undertaken without proper consideration as to how the necessary funds are to be found.

14. All this raises, *inter alia*, questions of priority involving matters of policy which the Government alone can decide, but it seems evident that any great advance in the field of social services must wait upon major advances on the economic front; in other words, such things as the improvement of communications, the development of agricultural and industrial resources and the promotion of physical health must take precedence over such things as cultural education and social welfare. This is, of course, not to say that no advance in the two latter fields should be attempted. Indeed, the full potentiality of the physical and human resources of the Province cannot be achieved until education is much more widespread than it is at present. It is merely a reminder that first things must come first, and that the advances in the economic and social field must be properly phased.

15. Any substantial advance in either the economic or social sphere will require—

(*a*) the provision of a large number of trained personnel who do not at present exist in Bengal and who will therefore have to be trained locally or hired from outside, and

(*b*) the elaboration of methods and procedures in the realm both of technology and of administration. It seems to us that in the initial stages of development it will be necessary to conduct in various parts of the Province a series of "pilot" experiments where the necessary techniques can be worked out.

16. All this requires the most careful planning, execution and supervision. We are satisfied that the existing machinery of Government is incapable of producing the necessary plans or of carrying them into effect, and we regard it as our prime task to evolve a machine which will be adequate for the purpose in view. But there is one thing which we should like to make abundantly clear at the outset, namely, that, in our view, the capacity of the machine which we shall recommend will fail to achieve its maximum results in the exploitation of land and water resources if the present outmoded system of land tenure remains. Apart from this consideration, the administration of the Districts in Bengal is clogged at every turn by the present system, and we cannot too strongly urge on administrative grounds alone that Government should give the earliest possible effect to the decision which they have already taken to adopt the majority recommendations of the Floud Commission. It is a subject to which we shall revert later on in our Report.

CHAPTER III

The Machine—Structure (a) at Headquarters

*"A Government without good management is a house builded on sand."**

A.—STRUCTURE OF THE HEADQUARTER MACHINE AS A WHOLE

Introductory

17. No one, least of all those who have to operate it, would claim that the administrative machine in Bengal is adequate for the tasks which confront it, still less for the greater tasks that lie head. The Government machine in Bengal is not unique in this respect. Even in America where they not unjustifiably pride themselves on their skill and experience in the organisational field, a Committee on the Administrative Management in the Government of the United States, appointed in 1936, rendered a Report which was highly critical of the administrative machine in the United States and made radical and drastic proposals for its reform. As will appear, we have done likewise.

18. It is a habit of governmental organisations to be resistant to evolutionary changes and to lag behind progress in political ideas and advances in administrative techniques. There are several reasons for this. The main reason, perhaps, is that bureaucracies are free from the compulsion under which business organisations labour of keeping up with competitors and they do not have a profit and loss account at the end of each year to indicate whether or not their methods and their administration require amendment or improvement. The spirit of adventure and enterprise is lacking, partly because, at any rate in a Democracy, all the actions of Government servants are liable to criticism by the Legislature. They therefore tend to play for safety, to go slow and to rely on precedent, and to seek in the past rules for guidance and action even when the situation facing them is in essence different from the circumstances of the past to which they appeal. All this was of less moment when the functions of Government were primarily quasi-judicial, regulatory, the keeping of law and order and the raising of taxes. But organisational structures and methods which were suitable enough when the activities of Government were confined to the regulatory, policing and revenue fields are quite inadequate to handle the advances on the economic and social fronts which have increasingly become the major concern of Governments in progressive countries.

Defects of the Present Machine

19. The outstanding impression gained by any one who studies the administrative machine in Bengal is the almost complete absence of co-ordination between its several parts. Now co-ordination,

*President Roosevelt's message to Congress, January 12, 1937.

together with decentralisation, the establishment of clear and precise lines of authority and the fixing of levels at which decisions are taken, are the main principles of organisation, whether in business or in Governments.

20. At present, it appears to be nobody's concern to supervise and co-ordinate the business of Government as a whole. It may be objected that the Cabinet itself is the machinery for the co-ordinating of Government business, but, meeting at intervals and provided with only a part-time Secretary, it is clearly ill-equipped for the purpose. The Cabinet's business is policy, not management.

21. In particular, there is no mechanism or agency to ensure that those activities of Government which are directed to a common end and which should therefore be interwoven and interlocked are closely and constantly co-ordinated.

Basic Objectives of Government

22. Before coming to the remedies for the above defects, and particularly the second, it is necessary to analyse what are the main objectives of the Government in Bengal. They fall under four heads—

(1) The provision of justice.

(2) The maintenance of the public peace.

(3) The development of the Province's physical and human resources.

(4) The financing of Government activities, particularly that of development.

23. Little need be said about the first two, except to remark as regards the first that litigation in Bengal plays a regrettably disproportionate part in the life of the Province; and, as regards the second, that the maintenance of law and order will, unfortunately, remain, particularly in the immediately post-war years, a major pre-occupation of Government.

24. It is the third objective which is becoming, and as we hope and expect will increasingly become, the chief activity of Government: it is here that the main problems of co-ordination will arise.

25. The fourth activity will largely subserve the third and should, without sacrificing sound financial principles, involve a different attitude to the provision of funds for development schemes. Money should not, as tends to be the case at present, be withheld from schemes, otherwise sound and beneficial to the people of the Province, merely because they will not produce an adequate *direct* return on the capital outlay.

Chief Minister as Co-ordinator

26. We are in no doubt that the only Minister to whom could be assigned the duties of co-ordinating the machinery of Government

and of co-ordinating the activities of those Departments operating in the economic and social field is the Chief Minister.

27. By co-ordination of the machinery of Government we do not mean co-ordination of general policy, which is a question for the Cabinet, but such matters as personnel management and conditions of service: appointments: techniques and procedures: and common services which should straddle, and be applied to, all Departments of Government. The Chief Minister's Department should therefore, *inter alia,* include the Organisation and Methods Division, which, the Bengal Government, alone, so far as we know, of the Governments of India, have set up: the personnel management function hitherto exercised by the Finance Department; and, for reasons which we give below, publicity.

Regrouping of Portfolios

28. The first step towards securing over-all co-ordination, whether in a large business or in a Government is to secure as much co-ordination as possible at a lower level by grouping together those functions or activities which have something in common either in respect of the methods they employ or as regards the objectives they pursue. There are other possible groupings, such as the classes of people to be catered for or the geographical area to be dealt with: but, for the immediate purpose, these two last groupings can be ignored.

29. Applying the principles stated above, some reshuffling of portfolios is clearly called for.

30. There is nothing in common between Excise and Forests and we propose that the former should be transferred to the Board of Revenue (to be expanded as we explain later) and the latter to the Agricultural Department.

31. Similarly, we propose that the responsibility for the administration of the Sales Tax and the Agricultural Income-Tax should be transferred to the Board of Revenue, who should in fact be responsible for the collection of all revenue.

32. The Revenue Department should be abolished, its functions being transferred to other portfolios as described in a later Chapter.

33. The Finance Department and the Board of Revenue should be combined in a single portfolio, that of Finance and Revenue Minister.

34. The Irrigation Department should be separated from the Department of Communications and Works. We propose this for two reasons. First, because the rivers of Bengal constitute at the same time one of its main problems and assets and require the whole attention of a Minister, and, secondly, because, in our view, it is sound to organise a Department on the basis of the objective aimed

at, which, in this case, is the optimum utilisation of Bengal's waterways. We propose therefore a new portfolio, that of "River Utilization", which will embrace—

(*i*) the prevention of floods;

(*ii*) the provision of hydro-electric power;

(*iii*) the provision of navigable waterways;

(*iv*) the irrigation of agricultural lands (at all times of the year).

35. To what remains of the Communications and Works Department we propose to transfer the Transport functions of the Home Department. We have given careful thought to what should happen to the responsibility now devolving upon the Communications and Works Department for buildings. Logically, the provision of buildings being a common service, responsibility should be transferred to the Chief Minister's Department, but we have decided against this course for two reasons. First, in order to enable the Chief Minister's Department to devote its energies to the maximum extent to the co-ordination of Government business, we are anxious not to overload it with responsibility for the administration of more staff than is absolutely necessary. Secondly, it would be uneconomical to establish two sets of Civil Engineers, one in the Communications and Works Department and one in the Chief Minister's Department. We therefore, recommend that there should be a portfolio of Communications, Transport and Buildings.

36. We have already suggested that Forests should be transferred to Agriculture. We conceive it to be the task of the Department of Agriculture to review the optimum utilisation of the land of Bengal as a single problem. Its principal objective would be to secure increased productivity from the soil, and a greater yield per acre whether from better seed, better fertilisers, better implements, better cultivation, better irrigation or from any other means available. It involves looking at the land as a source of bigger and better crops rather than as a producer of revenue, although the former will ultimately lead to the latter. Whatever may have been the reasons for setting up a separate Agricultural Development Department, we are satisfied that to retain it as an agency distinct from the Agriculture Department is organisationally unsound. Agricultural development is essentially a function of the Director of Agriculture, and we therefore propose that the Agricultural Development Department should be abolished.

37. At present, Public Health and Local Self-Government are linked in a single portfolio. There are no strong reasons for this combination except that they are similarly linked in the United Kingdom, and that some at least of the responsibility for Public Health rests on Local Self-Governing Bodies. The latter argument will disappear if, as we understand to be the case, the

Government has decided to provincialise the health services, while the former argument has little relevance. We therefore propose that the two functions should be separated.

38. The separation would leave the Local Self-Government Portfolio a light one and we propose to add to it that of the Co-operative Credit and Rural Indebtedness Department. We justify this combination on two grounds. First, that the combined portfolio is not likely to throw up so many questions at the policy level as to make the charge too onerous for a single Minister to handle, and, secondly, that the two activities have this in common, that they both represent Agencies through which Government attempt to achieve their objectives.

39. We have considered whether Education and Health should not be combined into a single Portfolio of Social Services. There is much to be said for such a combination on logical and administrative grounds, since they are both concerned with the development of the human resources of the Province, and their grouping under a single head automatically secures the co-ordination of their activities *inter se*. On the other hand, they are both concerned with activities which (and this applies especially to Public Health) are bound to expand considerably in the post-war years, and on this basis there are cogent arguments for keeping them separate. We would leave the position at this: if at any time in the future there are compelling reasons for reducing the number of portfolios, the most obvious portfolios for amalgamation would be those of Education and Public Health. Registration should be transferred to the Judicial and Legislative Department, which is a very light portfolio.

40. As regards the Home Department, we have already suggested that it should shed to the Chief Minister's Department and to the Communications, Transport and Buildings Department responsibilities for appointments and transport respectively.

41. We propose to leave undisturbed the Commerce, Labour and Industries Department, except that later in the Report we shall have something to say about the improvement in Government's methods for dealing with labour questions.

42. We have paid only the scantiest attention to the Civil Supplies Department, and this for three reasons. First, we conceive the Civil Supplies Department as embracing activities most of which will disappear after an interval following the defeat of Japan, and we have therefore felt justified in leaving it out of the longer term picture which we have attempted to draw in this Report. Secondly, the Department has only recently been investigated, not only by the Honorary Adviser on Organisation to the Government of Bengal but also by the Braund Committee. Thirdly, we were given to understand that the Famine Commission had also examined the organisation and working of the Department.

43. We are quite satisfied that the Department of Publicity should be abolished as a separate portfolio. Apart from the fact

that it is a very light portfolio, there are reasons of principle, expediency and economy for proposing its disappearance. Publicity is not in activity or end in itself. You do not publicise publicity. It is a technique for securing that the message which Government or its several Departments wish to communicate to the people is put across by the most appropriate means in the most effective way. It is the duty of individual Departments who have messages to convey to determine the content of these messages and to consult the Publicity expert as to the best technical means for transmitting the messages to the people they want to reach. Publicity is in effect a common service at the disposal of all Departments, and, as such, finds its natural home in the Chief Minister's office. So located, it could be made responsible for any messages or information which the Government as a whole, as distinct from a particular Department, wish to put out.

44. In the preceding Chapter we have urged the early carrying into effect of the majority recommendations of the Floud Commission. This will be a difficult and complex task requiring unremitting attention and constant drive. When a new task of such a nature and magnitude arises, it is both expedient and sound in principle to create a separate agency to carry it out, so long as the new agency does not involve serious overlapping or conflicts of jurisdiction. When the task is completed, the functions which will remain can probably be easily absorbed into pre-existing agencies. We do not anticipate that the creation of a separate portfolio to put through the Floud Commission proposals will lead to duplication or jurisdictional conflicts, and we accordingly recommend the appointment of a Minister of Land Reform.

45. We thus have thirteen portfolios as at present, but with in certain cases a redistribution of functions—

(1) Chief Minister's Department.
(2) Communications, Transport and Buildings.
(3) River Utilisation.
(4) Land Improvement and Agriculture.
(5) Finance and Revenue.
(6) Public Health and Medical.
(7) Education.
(8) Commerce, Labour and Industries.
(9) Local Self-Government, Co-operation, Agricultural Credit, Rural Indebtedness and Relief.
(10) Judicial and Legislative.
(11) Home.
(12) Civil Supplies.
(13) Land Reform.

46. We feel that any increase in the number of portfolios beyond thirteen would immediately begin to increase the problem of co-ordination beyond manageable limits.

B.—STRUCTURE OF THE HEADQUARTER MACHINE FOR DEVELOPMENT

Co-ordination of Development Activities

47. As we have already indicated, it is in the field of development activities that close and constant co-ordination is required both at the policy and at the executive level. It is obvious that plans for the improvement of communications by means of roads should be co-ordinated with plans for additional railway mileage or improved waterways. Again, the treatment of one of the chief rivers of the Province involves not only the Department of River Utilisation but also the Department of Commerce, Labour and Industries (the provision of hydro-electric power), the Department of Health (anti-malarial interests), the Agricultural Department (increased cultivable area) and the Communications, Transport and Buildings Department.

Cabinet Committee on Development

48. Problems, such as are adumbrated above, will involve questions of policy and priority which only Ministers can resolve, and we contemplate a Cabinet Development Committee composed of Ministers in charge of Development Departments and presided over by the Chief Minister. The decisions of this Committee would be referred to the full Cabinet for consideration and endorsement or amendment.

Development Board

49. Plans and schemes in the development field involve complex questions of priorities, administration, techniques and policy, and these should not come before the Cabinet Development Committee until they have been thoroughly worked out and examined in consultation by the Departments concerned. We propose therefore the creation of a Development Board, presided over by the Chief Secretary, who would become the Civil Service Head of the Chief Minister's Department, and consisting of the Secretaries of the Development Departments, together with the Secretary of the Finance Department. The Board should be provided with a full-time Secretary, with the rank of Joint Secretary. Heads of Atttached Offices concerned with questions being considered by the Board would attend its meetings.

50. The functions of the Development Board will be threefold—

(*a*) to prepare for consideration of the Cabinet Development Committee an integrated Provincial Development Plan by endorsing modifying or adjusting the plans of each individual Department, or by putting forward proposals initiated by itself;

(*b*) to transform the functional plans of each Department into a territorial plan for each district;

(*c*) to keep a constant watch over the development plans of the Departments and to control the progress of each District plan.

51. The Development Board would consider, among many others, such questions as the optimum utilisation of land, would recommend to the Cabinet Committee on Development the basic prices of agricultural products, would examine technical education plans to ensure that they are both sound educationally and will produce students in sufficient numbers and with the right outlook and training for the Province's later requirements of technical staff, and would arrange that the whole field of Rural Reconstruction is being covered either by the Technical Officers of other departments in the mufassal or by those of General Administration itself.

Territorial or District Plans

52. As regards the second function of the Development Board, that is, the territorial aspect of Provincial plans, this is a new concept which we believe to be fundamental. We shall refer later to the urgent need for the co-ordination of Government activities within each district. Such co-ordination will always be impossible unless preliminary co-ordination at a higher and wider level has taken place.

Development Board—A Planning Body

53. We wish to make it clear that the Development Board is a planning body. However, while we believe that planning should be regarded as a separate function, we do not believe that it should be divorced from execution. Thus, while we visualise the Chief Secretary in a planning capacity as the Chairman of the Development Board, he should also become the immediate executive superior of each District Officer so far as Development activities are concerned.

Organisation of Development Board

54. We visualise the necessity of attaching certain full-time experts to the Development Board to bring a different point of view to bear from that of an individual Department. We suggest such appointments as Scientific Adviser who would also ensure the co-ordination of all Government research activities, an Economic Adviser and an Engineering Adviser. The newly created Statistics Bureau should also be attached to the Development Board. These staffs would be borne on the establishment of the Chief Minister's Department.

55. It is probable that certain Standing Committees will be necessary to consider questions where departments are intimately and regularly concerned, though they may not normally require the meeting of the full Board. A Communications and Transport Committee is an example of what we have in mind. It will perform approximately the functions now allotted to the Transport Board in the Home Department.

Co-ordination of Technical Activities

56. Just as it is necessary for the Cabinet that alternatives should first be hammered out at official level by the Development Board, so it is advisable, to facilitate the latter's work, that certain questions should first be discussed at *technical level* between Heads of Departments. For this reason, we recommend the setting up of a Technical Interdepartmental Committee of which the Chairman would be the Development Board Secretary.

57. As an example of the kind of problem that we would consider for this Committee we would mention the road building programme of the Ministry of Communications, Transport and Buildings and the objective of the Public Health Department to extinguish malaria. The Road Engineers might well want to create borrow-pits, and if it proved eventually that the drainage of these borrow-pits was inadequate they might well be inclined to treat this as of minor importance. The Public Health Department, on the other hand, might want to set standards of drainage that would increase the number of culverts and the cost of road-making to an appreciable extent. Clearly, the matter cannot be left undecided, nor can the Road Engineers be allowed to proceed until the "break even" point has been found between the cost of road building and the danger of creating further breeding grounds for mosquitoes. It would be the duty of the Technical Interdepartmental Committee to examine this technical problem and make recommendations to the Development Board.

Advisory Bodies

58. So far, we have been considering Bodies consisting solely of Ministers or of officials. We are satisfied that, in the Development sphere, Advisory Bodies representative both of the wishes of the people whom the Development Departments serve and of expert knowledge in the fields of activity covered by these Departments, have a great contribution to make to the shaping and to the carrying into effect of Government policy. In this regard we endorse the views of the Haldane Committee on the Machinery of Government in the United Kingdom—Command 9230, 1918. The Committee expressed themselves as follows:—

> "The preservation of the full responsibility of Ministers for executive action will not, in our opinion, ensure that the course of administration which they adopt will secure and retain public confidence unless it is recognised as an obligation upon Departments to avail themselves of the advice and assistance of Advisory Bodies so constituted as to make available the knowledge and experience of all sections of the community affected by the activities of the Departments."

While laying down no hard and fast rule, we suggest that Advisory Bodies, the formation of which we strongly support, should be attached to Departments and not to the Development Board itself.

Organisation of the Chief Minister's Office

59. Before proceeding briefly to summarise the main proposals of this Chapter, there are one or two points of important detail which we ought to make. The Chief Secretary, who, under our scheme, will be the official Head of the Chief Minister's office, should be free to devote his main attention to his duties as Chairman of the Development Board, and also in that capacity to watching the progress of District plans. He will naturally be the Secretary to the Cabinet Committee on Development and to the Cabinet itself. While remaining ultimately responsible to the Chief Minister for all the functions assigned to the Chief Minister's Department, he should be relieved to the maximum extent possible of the day-to-day administration of the Department, the control through the Organisation and Methods and Establishment Divisions of the business of Government and also of the day-to-day control of appointments. In order to secure this result, he should be assisted by an Additional Secretary.

Summary

60. The main points in this Chapter can be summarised as follows :—

(*i*) the portfolios of Government should be redistributed as in paragraph 45, in order to secure a better grouping of functions, particularly with reference to common objectives;

(*ii*) the Chief Minister should become the co-ordinator of the business of Government in general, and, subject to the Cabinet, of the policies and activities of the Development Departments;

(*iii*) a Cabinet Committee, of which the Chief Minister should be Chairman, should be set up to co-ordinate the development of the physical and human resources of the Province;

(*iv*) the Chief Minister and the Cabinet Committee should be assisted by a Development Board, of which the Chief Secretary, who becomes the official Head of the Chief Minister's Department, should be Chairman;

(*v*) the Chief Secretary should become the official chief of District Officers in respect of development activities.

Execution of Plans lies in the Mufassal

61. While major questions of policy are necessarily settled at Headquarters, the execution of that policy is carried out, for the most part, in the Districts and it will be convenient at this stage to turn to the question of District administration. We shall return to Headquarters later.

CHAPTER IV

The Machine—Structure (b) in the Districts

A.—STRUCTURE OF DISTRICT MACHINE FOR DEVELOPMENT

Development at District Level

62. It would be futile to establish a mechanism, such as we have proposed in the preceding Chapter, to facilitate, even to compel, at Headquarters, the formulation of a Provincial Development Plan if the execution of that plan in the District is not integrated and co-ordinated.

63. At present, Government can hardly be said to have any coherent, consistent or continuing *plan*, as distinct from general objectives, in the Districts. At best, an energetic District Officer proceeds to push through some particular aspect of Government policy, whether it be pure water-supply or co-operative marketing, in which he happens to be particularly interested, only to be succeeded by another officer who regards his predecessor's chosen activities as misguided foibles and proceeds to push forward enthusiasms of his own. At the worst, the District Officer takes little or no interest in Development, regarding this as the function of the representatives of the "Nation Building" Departments in his District. All this adds up to a virtual negation of progress because no schemes will take root unless they are pushed vigorously, continuously and uninterruptedly.

Provincial and District Plans

64. Before proceeding further, it may be useful to illustrate what we mean by a Provincial and a District Plan respectively. Let us suppose that, after consideration of the report of the Development Board, the Cabinet Development Committee recommend, and the Cabinet decide, as a part of its overall Provincial Development Plan, to clean out and to stock with fish fry all the tanks in Bengal in order to reduce malaria and to increase the output of protective food. The programme should be completed in four years, but since Districts A, B and C will produce the most rapid and profitable results, they are called upon to clean and stock their tanks within two years. This objective should be stated to Districts A, B and C in general terms and it would be for District A (and the same would apply to B and C) to work out a programme, choosing which localities should be treated first, determining the rate at which the work should proceed with a view to its completion within the two years laid down by Headquarters. Both non-technical and technical factors would enter into the settlement of the programme. We have chosen a simple example but the same problem and the same approach are involved in working out an overall District Plan to give effect to an

overall master plan for the Province. Before considering the method and the machinery for working out and subsequently for progressing the District Plan, it is necessary to examine the relationship at present subsisting between the District Officer and the local staffs of the technical or Nation Building Departments.

Relationship between District Officer and Departmental Officers in the Districts

65. The present position is, in our judgment, thoroughly unsatisfactory, both from the point of view of the District Officer himself as well as from the point of view of efficiency of the Government machine and the welfare of the people in the District. The lot of the District Officer, like that of the comic opera policeman, is not a happy one. He is expected to see that nothing goes wrong in his District, but he has little power outside the Magistrate and Collector field to see that things go right. He is supposed, to quote from an official publication, "to compose differences between other officers" but he has no power to impose his will upon the recalcitrant. He can cajole and persuade: he cannot compel. He is regarded as responsible for stimulating the activities of the officers of other Departments, but he has no real control over them, and, although they are under an obligation to keep him informed of their activities, the extent to which this obligation is discharged depends in most cases on the personal factor. Even if they keep him informed of what they are doing, they are under no compulsion to discuss their plans with him in advance.

66. The independent and disconnected activities of Government in the mufassal have reached such a point of confusion that District Officers are unanimous that something must be done. In our view also, the situation, if left to itself, can only deteriorate further because the activities of Government in the mufassal will increase and practically every department is thinking in terms of a "Provincialised Service" and makes little attempt to disguise its determination to go ahead with its own plans without reference to any other part of Government. We have been forcibly struck with the general attitude on the part of departments to hoe their own row, and the machinery we are proposing is specifically intended to counter the unfortunate results of such unco-ordinated action.

Need of Co-ordination of District Activities

67. We are satisfied that the time has come in Bengal, and we do not doubt in other Provinces as well, to co-ordinate all the District Development activities under a single administrative head. When the objective in a geographical area like a District is the welfare of its people, separate activities are merely means to a single end and each cannot be considered in isolation from the rest. Moreover, specialisation is itself a disruptive force. The point has been well put by David Lilienthal in his book on the

"Tennessee Valley Authority", where the mechanisms and techniques of technological and administrative co-ordination have been so brilliantly worked out:

> "Even at best it is not easy for each specialist to appraise the relative importance of his own task as part of the whole picture, or its importance as compared with the tasks in some other technical branch. In fact, the desperate part of the problem, as many people have observed, is the realisation of how rarely these different groups of specialists seem to care about anything beyond their own specialities.
>
> This is not to say that specialists are narrow human beings. It is understandable that concentration and pre-occupation with a particular phase of a problem breeds impatience with anything not directly in the line of vision. The more conscientious and excited the specialist is about soil chemistry, metallurgy, fish and wild life, or statistical methods, the more likely he is to see all else as an adjunct.
>
> It is an ironic fact that the very technical skills which are ostensibly employed to further the progress of men, by the intensity of their specialisation, create disunity, rather than order and imperil the whole success of their common objective. Resources cannot be developed in unity until each technologist has learned to subordinate his expertness to the common purpose, has come to see the region and its problems 'in its entirety'."

The same point is made by Luther Gulick, one of the leading authorities on the Science of Administration, in his paper on the Theory of Organisation:

> "Every highly trained technician has a profound sense of omniscience and a great desire for complete independence in the service of society. When employed by Government he knows exactly what the people need better than they do themselves, and he knows how to render this service. He tends to be utterly oblivious of all other needs, because, after all, is not his particular technology the road to salvation? Any restraint applied to him is 'limitation of freedom', and any criticism 'springs from ignorance and jealousy'. Every budget increase he secures is 'in the public interest', while every increase secured elsewhere is 'a sheer waste'. His efforts and manœuvres to expand are 'public education' and 'civic organisation', while similar efforts by others are 'propaganda' and 'politics'."

Alternative Solutions

68. While, as we have said, District Officers were unanimous that some remedy should be sought to the present state of affairs, they were divided as to what the remedy should be. Some District

Officers take the view that they should be relieved of all functions, save those of Law and Order and the collection of revenue. Others maintain that the District Officer must be given full authority over the Technical Officers of all other departments.

69. These are of course the two main alternatives. Some of our Members were inclined at first to favour the complete separation of development work from the District Magistrate-Collector, and to create a new post of District Officer for Development, having equal rank with that of District Magistrate. There are certain definite advantages in this: it conforms to what in the language of Administrative science is known as the "principle of homogeneity" and goes a long way at one bound towards what would be something very like the ultimate picture to which the mufassal organisation must in time develop. However, on further consideration we came to the conclusion that this is a matter in which we should hasten slowly, partly because the trained administrative personnel are not available, partly because it will be some years before there will be enough technical personnel in the Districts to warrant the establishment of a separate administrative set up, but mainly because the status and prestige of the District Magistrate in the eyes of the people is still very high and it is desirable to utilise this prestige and harness it to the work of development. It will be sufficient to record our main recommendation that the existing District Officer become the Head of Government in his District as a first step in our proposed reorganisation.

70. If some Departments regard this as a revolutionary proposal, they may take comfort from the reflection that it is merely a restoration of the position established by Sir George Campbell in 1872.

> " 'It is the Lieutenant-Governor's wish', wrote Sir George Campbell, the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, in 1872, 'to render the heads of districts no longer the drudges of many departments and masters of none, but in fact the general controlling authority over all departments in each district...... the real executive chief and administrator of the tract of country committed to him, and supreme over every one and everything except the proceedings of the Courts of Justice'."

71. To enable the District Officer to carry the extra burden important changes are necessary in the organisation of work and status of officers immediately subordinate to the District Officer (our detailed recommendations on this are discussed later in paragraphs 92-103).

Working out the District Plan

72. The District Officer, as we have seen, will receive from the Chief Secretary the general outline of the development plan for his District. He will call together the chief technical officers, posted to his District by the Heads of the Technical Departments, and

proceed to work out with them, and with the advice of his own staff, a plan for combined operations in the area of his development jurisdiction. He will also call local authorities into consultation as necessary.

73. The technical officers will suggest ways in which the plan should be shaped from their own point of view and the District Officer will modify them in such a way as to ensure that the development of the District as a whole proceeds as a really combined operation. He will in fact decide *what* is to be done, *where* it is to be done and *when* it is to be done. He will also set the time in which it is to be done and will hold monthly meetings of his technical officers to follow the progress of each part of the plan. He will report such progress to the Chief Secretary.

74. As the District Officer will be held responsible for progress on all fronts, he will have to ensure that each technical officer has all the assistance and materials necessary, and he will report back to the Chief Secretary whenever this assistance has to be forthcoming from Government.

75. The only parts of the Provincial development plan for which District Officers will not be responsible will be those operations which are wider than the District in concept, though wholly or partially within the District boundaries. Such for example would be the Dacca Farm, and river control and communications in general, both the planning and execution of which will be central provincial matters.

76. Technical officers will correspond direct with the Heads of their Technical Departments on technical matters, i.e., on *how* any particular project is to be carried out; for instance, how teaching should be given, how a dispensary should be arranged, how tanks should be cleaned, how potato seeds should be stored, and so on. Technical Departments will lay down standards for all such activities which the District Officer will be expected to accept.

77. The relations of technical officers to District Officers will be appreciably different from what they are now. Instead of a vague, undefined relationship which either allows officers to pursue their own whims at the expense of the whole or leads to a test of strength between the District Officer and the technical officer, backed up by his Department, the District Officer will be the undisputed Head of all other Government agencies in his District except as regards the internal administration and technical methods of those agencies. The essential difference will be that a target will be set for the District as a whole, and that the District Officer, in consultation with the technical heads and local advisers, will work out the manner in which the target is to be attained. He will be in at the beginning, instead of only when something goes wrong. The technical officers will thus be the direct subordinates of the District Officer for what they are to do, and for actually getting it done.

78. The Departmental officers, who will thus be directly responsible to the District Officers in every respect save that of the technical aspect of their work, will include amongst others the Civil Surgeon, the District Agricultural, Fisheries and Veterinary Officers, District Inspector of Schools and Inspectors of Co-operative Societies.

79. The District Officer will build up a combined operations' team from the personnel at his disposal; this implies, that any application which he may make for the replacement of an obvious misfit will be sympathetically considered by Government. As a further mark of the position of the District Officer in command of the "combined operations' team", officers of district rank in other departments should submit their tour programmes to him for approval, and their travelling allowance bills for countersignature.

Rural Reconstruction

80. Rural reconstruction is not, to our mind, a separate activity of Government. It is the function (in the mathematical sense) or the end result of the activities of the several "Nation Building" Departments. In our judgment, it is unsound to have a Director of Rural Reconstruction, with a separate staff, parallel to, but with no control over, the representatives of the technical departments, and indeed, almost wholly independent of the District Officer. With such a set up there have been, as there were bound to be, friction and conflicts of jurisdiction and action. In the scheme which we have put forward there is no place for a separate rural reconstruction staff.

81. This proposal to disband the rural reconstruction staff and the corresponding proposal which we have already made to abolish as a separate agency the Agricultural Development Department should not be read in any way as a criticism of the work of Mr. Ishaque, for which indeed we have the warmest admiration. With an unsuitable organisation, and an imperfectly trained staff, he has for years, with immense enthusiasm, determination and drive, steadfastly pursued the aim of improving the lot and well-being of the people in the villages of Bengal. We have ample evidence that many a young officer has been inspired by the contagion of his example with a new vision of service to the rural population of the Province.

82. As will be clear from what we have already said, it will be the District Officer, through his own subordinates and as co-ordinator of the activities of the technical officers who will be responsible for rural reconstruction. We propose to reinforce him in pursuit of this goal in two ways. We propose—

(1) an increase in the number of Circle Officers with corresponding reduction in the area in their jurisdiction, and with some modification in the scope of their activities; and

(2) the strengthening and expansion of Union Boards' activities.

Increase in Circle Officers

83. We recommend that Circle Officers should be increased to one per thana. Their main function will consist in planning in detail the development work of their Circle, and in co-ordinating directly the activities of any technical officer operating within this area. Local technical officers will be in the same relation to Circle Officers as their District superiors will be to their District Officer. As these technical officers may for some time to come be few and far between, the Circle Officer will be mainly concerned with guiding, encouraging and helping Union Boards, Co-operative Societies and Pallimangal Samitis, and stimulating them to make use for themselves of the techniques and services made available by Government. Like the District Officer, he will prepare a Circle plan for his *elaka* to facilitate achieving his various targets, which will have been set him by the District Plan, of primary schools, dispensaries, minor irrigation schemes, tank improvement, etc. So long as the Bengal Agricultural Debtors Act remains in operation, he should be the local Debt Settlement Officer and will find much of his time occupied as an agent for the Local Self-Government, Rural Indebtedness and Co-operative Credit Departments. He will still have to act as a General Information Bureau of the Government.

84. It is a sound principle of organisation to cut out of the chain of authority or of reporting any link which does not contribute either to action or information. The extent to which the application of this principle will make it possible for the Subdivisional Officer to be bypassed in correspondence between the District Officer and the Circle Officer is a matter for detailed investigation which we recommend as one of the first tasks of the Organisation and Methods Division.

85. We have considered whether, with a much reduced geographical area, the Circle Officer could undertake the hearing of 2nd and 3rd class complaint cases sent to him by the Subdivisional Officer, and the collection of Government dues. It would be an obvious advantage if it were possible without incurring expenditure on the provision of separate staff for the purpose, to decentralise to the Circle level the trial of some cases (we would in any event exclude police cases) and the collection of Government dues. Apart, however, from the fact that to combine the functions of magistracy and dues collection with that of development offends against the principle of homogeneity, we are anxious not to burden the Circle Officer with duties which will seriously interfere with his prime task of pursuing and co-ordinating development activities. Whether such serious interferences would be involved is a matter for examination, and we propose that the point be included in the investigation we have recommended in the preceding paragraph.

Strengthening of Union Boards

86. No improvements will be lasting unless the villager himself comes to understand and feel the want of them. The more actively he participates in Rural Reconstruction, the quicker and better will be the results. Local Self-Government can hardly be said to have proved itself very successful yet in Bengal, but the Union Boards seem to us the most promising of these institutions. We visualise these Boards as becoming definitely a more active agent in the development work both in the activities they undertake and in their influence on village life. Obviously, at higher levels—Government and District—it is possible to have considerable specialisation. However, if each Technical Department were to be provincialised to include technical officers in every Union, the cost would at present be excessive. On the other hand, a Jack of all Trades is master of none. We propose to strengthen the Union Boards so that they can become the basic unit of administration in the Province. Union Boards should have a full-time Government paid clerk (a Jack of all Trades and the last officer in the development chain) and, at the same time the Members of the Board should begin to specialise in the promotion of some or other of Government activities—education, public works, sanitation, etc.

Summary of Proposals for the Organisation of Provincial Development

87. We believe the above proposals taken as a whole are the best that can be devised in the particular circumstances of Bengal for facilitating the development of the Province's human and physical resources. For the first time there is a direct line of authority in development matters from the Cabinet to the Union Board. Moreover, at each stage development is viewed as a whole, and provision made for the proper co-ordination of all its aspects. We have provided a solution to that problem which is a regular source of friction—the integration of administrative and technical staff. Hitherto, the attempts of Government to reach the villager have not been particularly successful. We have constructed a ladder to bridge the gap which should be both serviceable and economical.

88. The formulation of the Provincial Development Plan and the execution of its individual parts will thus proceed along the following lines:—

(1) Departments of the Secretariat work out the proposed functional policy for the Province, i.e., *what* is to be done in Health, Agriculture, etc.

(2) Development Board:

Point out necessary modifications to ensure a co-ordinated Provincial Development Policy, i.e., integrate the "*whats*".

Propose how functional plans should be turned into District Plans, i.e., *where* and *when*, and *at what rate* the Provincial Development policy should be put into execution in each District.

(3) Cabinet decide on the policy they wish to adopt in general, based on the examination of the problem by the Development Board.

(4) Executive Departments work out the "*how*", and instruct their own Technical District Officers or Inspectors.

(5) Development Board interpret Cabinet policy into individual District Plans for issue by the Chief Secretary as general instructions to District Officers; this will form the Development Target for each District—what is to be done and the time by which each part is to be completed.

(6) District Officers prepare District and Circle Plans with advice of Technical Officers and Local Authorities.

(7) Technical Officers and Local Authorities proceed to execute their part of the District programme (*how*).

(8) Circle Officers plan and supervise the rural reconstruction of their *elaka*.

(9) District Officers control progress of their plans, and report to Chief Secretary; District Officers also forward progress reports from Technical Officers to the Departments concerned, so that the latter can follow the progress of their own activities for the Province as a whole.

(10) Chief Secretary lays District Progress Reports before Development Board for examination and comment, and then before Cabinet.

(11) Ministers supervise the progress of their respective Departments and in Cabinet review the progress of Provincial Development as a whole.

B.—STRUCTURE OF DISTRICT MACHINE AS A WHOLE

The Burden on the District Officer

89. It may be argued that to charge the District Officer with responsibilities for law and order, collection of revenue, co-ordination of all "nation building" activities, civil supplies (a temporary charge) and general administration (by which we mean what is left over of Government activities in the District outside the four groups of duties mentioned) is to impose upon him a task which only a superman could bear.

90. Part of the answer, at least, is that he has all those responsibilities already and to give him that control over technical departments which we have recommended lightens rather than adds to his burden. It is true that he will combine the seemingly

incompatible functions of a police man and a tax gatherer with the beneficent activities of promoting the welfare of the people: and that, as we have already indicated, the combination of non-homogeneous functions in a single executive or operating group is normally regarded as unsound in principle and in practice, although it is accepted that such a combination may work satisfactorily in special conditions. We have given reasons why we think that the present conditions in Bengal constitute special conditions in this context, though the difficulty of having to train officers for magisterial and revenue work seriously reduces the effectiveness of the staff at the disposal of general administration.

91. But we have no doubt that as the numbers of Technical Officers in the Districts increase and nation building activities correspondingly expand, it will be necessary sooner or later to hive off Development activities from those of law and order, etc. By that time it will have been necessary to transfer to the separate Development Officer powers now vested in the District Officer as Magistrate and Collector.

Organisation of the District

92. We conceive the problems of District organisation in the foreseeable future to be fourfold. First, to secure a set up which will at one and the same time facilitate the separation in due course of Development activities from the rest and give the District Officer a better control over the multifarious duties assigned to him. Second, and to some extent this is involved in the first, to give the District Officer an adequate staff, both as to quantity and quality. Third, to relieve him of duties which he can shed without detriment to, and indeed to the advantage of, the discharge of his main functions. Fourth, to give him greater delegated authority from Headquarters on matters of relatively unimportant detail, which at present consume a disproportionate amount of his time and energy.

Five Main Divisions of the District Office

93. The work of the District Officer falls into five clearly defined groups—

(*i*) Law and Order.
(*ii*) Collection of all Revenues and Government Dues.
(*iii*) Development.
(*iv*) Civil Supplies.
(*v*) Services, i.e., activities carried out on behalf of any Department of Government (e.g., information) or on behalf of the District itself, Treasury work, etc.

94. We contemplate that the District Office of the future will be organised into these five groups of activities. Where work justifies, each group would be in charge of a separate officer directly responsible to the District Officer for the efficient administration of

his group of activities. Where the activities of one group do not provide a full day's work, an officer may take charge of two or more groups, though the activities of each group must be kept strictly separate, and in no circumstances should an officer share responsibility for one group with another officer. Such an organisation does not of itself postulate any increase in the numbers of the existing staff.

Grading of the Principal Posts in the District Office

95. The rank of these immediate subordinates of the District Officer may well vary from district to district. For example, "Collection of all Revenues and Government Dues" might in one district be of such importance that an officer of the status of an Additional Collector would be required, while in another district a Deputy Collector might adequately discharge the task. "Law and Order" might need an Additional District Magistrate in one place, and a Senior Deputy Magistrate in another. What is necessary is that the ability of the officer in charge of each group should be sufficient to enable him to discharge satisfactorily the normal work in that group; and that his experience and sense of responsibility should be such that he can recognise those problems which he should solve himself, and those upon which he should consult the District Officer.

96. Treasury work varies greatly from district to district, and in some districts it is a very full day's work for a senior officer. Where this is so, there will be a separate Treasury Officer, with another officer in charge of the other "services". Where Treasury work is not a full day's task, we consider that the Treasury Officer should be responsible for all other "services" also. The officer in charge of the Treasury and, where there is one, the officer in charge of the "other services" will be directly responsible to the District Officer.

97. We visualise that the immediate subordinates, no matter what their status, will carry the maximum possible delegation of authority from the District Officer, though the latter will remain ultimately responsible to Government for the activities of his subordinates. Even if the subordinate has the status of an Additional District Magistrate, he will be answerable to the District Officer, and will not be an independent authority.

Additional assistance to the District Officer

98. We have already recommended an increase in the number of Circle Officers and in the preceding paragraph we have suggested deputies in charge of all the main divisions of his office. The majority of District Officers favoured the addition of a gazetted officer as Personal Assistant to their personal staff. The majority of the Committee are opposed to this, believing that the interposition of a gazetted officer between the District Officer and the public will

impair that direct access to the District Officer which is considered so necessary. They believe, too, that the Personal Assistant would be resented by the District Officer's principal deputies, who would suspect him of screening the submissions made by them to the District Officer. One of our number, however, who has served as, and been served by, a Private Secretary, strongly supports the majority view of District Officers. He is convinced that a good Personal Assistant will be invaluable to a District Officer, and believes that there will be no difficulty in so arranging matters that the resentments feared by his colleagues will not arise. Moreover, he points out that a junior Bengal Junior Civil Service or Bengal Civil Service officer would obtain a most useful training while serving as Personal Assistant, the term of which should be limited to three years. But, while we are not at one over the question of a Personal Assistant, we are unanimous in thinking that the single confidential clerk allotted to the District Officer is not enough. A District Officer's working day is much longer than that of the clerk and he needs a minimum of two people on his personal staff, one a shorthand knowing confidential clerk and one a stenographer.

99. This additional staff will be a powerful reinforcement to the District Officer in the discharge of the task which confronts him. But this is not enough. There is at present too little specialisation by officers comprising the District Officer's superior staff. Deputy Magistrates for example divide their time between trying cases, revenue duties and general administration. This accounts, to a large extent, for the heavy delays in the dispensing of justice, which is common to most Districts. This is a subject to which we shall return in a later chapter.

100. A related point is the dual capacity in which the Sadar Subdivisional Officer is expected to serve. The original case work in the District Headquarters Court is Subdivisional work, and yet the Magistrates trying the cases also perform other duties of a strictly District nature. In principle, no post should cover different areas of jurisdiction, and we therefore recommend that the Sadar Subdivision should be regarded and treated as quite distinct from District Headquarters and should operate like an outlying Subdivision.

District Officer to be relieved of certain duties

101. In spite of all the help which can be given him by way of improved organisation and more and better staff, the District Officer and his principal deputies will still have a very heavy load to carry, and we have been concerned to examine whether there are not duties at present assigned to them which they could shed without detriment to the discharge of their main functions. One or two witnesses suggested that District Officers should be relieved of all responsibility for the Treasury. We have felt unable to accept this view, believing that it is a natural and important duty

of a Collector to be responsible for the Treasury. At the same time, we believe that some of the rules governing the Collector's responsibility are unduly exacting and impose upon him duties which it is unreasonable to expect him to perform. We refer particularly to the rules relating to the scrutiny of accounts and returns and to his counting of the Treasury each month. When the Treasury could be counted by weighing the coins, the task was a relatively easy one, requiring only an hour or so. Now that the contents of the Treasury consists of notes, it is a very different matter. A test check at one Treasury showed that it would take 172 hours to count its contents according to rules. We suggest that the rules should be amended.

102. There are, however, two directions in which some relief might be given. We refer to the hearing of appeals in cases from second and third class magistrates, and to the District Officer's duties as District Registrar.

(*a*) Although it is of value to the District Officer to examine the work of his subordinate magistrates, and although we would stress the importance of regular scrutiny of returns and of case records, we consider that appeals in second and third class cases might well be heard by the Sessions Judge and his subordinate judges. The Judges could readily bring to the District Officer's notice any instances of serious incompetence or miscarriage of justice.

(*b*) Secondly, we see no reason why the District Officer should perform the duties of District Registrar, and should remain within the chain of the Registration Department. We recommend that the Department should provide its own District Registrars, and that these officers should be in the same relationship to the District Officer as, for example, the District Agricultural Officer or other district head of a technical department.

Greater Delegation of Authority to the District Officer

103. The fourth way in which relief might be given to the District Officer is to accord him a greater measure of delegated authority from Headquarters. At present he is required to seek higher approval in a variety of matters which have no financial or administrative significance and which he might well be authorised to dispose of on the spot. We propose to deal with the question in greater detail later.

C.—SIZE OF DISTRICTS

No fixed Formula

104. There is clearly a limit, although there is no clear limit, to the size of a District. Several witnesses tendered evidence to

the effect that most of the Districts in Bengal were too big for effective administration. Some of them thought a population of about a million represented as much as a District Officer could handle, others, that $1\frac{1}{2}$ million was about right, and most of them thought that 2 million was the outside limit. Apart from the fact that it is impracticable to redraw the boundaries of all the Districts in the Province. it is not possible to find a formula which enables one to fix with precision the ideal size of a District. So much depends on the density of the population, the topography of the area and the nature and state of its communications. If, for example, the network of roads in the Province is, as we expect, greatly extended and improved in the post-war period, Districts which are now difficult to administer satisfactorily will become perfectly manageable.

Some Districts too large

105. What is a manageable size of a District is a matter of judgment rather than of formula, and, except that we would add 24-Parganas, we see no reason, in spite of the growth of population in the interval, to dissent from the judgment of the 1913-14 Bengal District Administration Committee, that the only Districts which call for subdivision are Mymensingh, Midnapore, Dacca and Bakarganj. The problem of 24-Parganas will be solved if the proposals affecting the District which we have made elsewhere in the Report are adopted.

D.—MISCELLANEOUS

The Sunderbans of the 24-Parganas

106. The problems of the Sunderbans in the 24-Parganas give rise to matters of such general and pressing interest, and serve as so outstanding an example of the dangers of un-co-ordinated development, that they call for special treatment.

107. When Government granted leases to the Lotdars, it imposed upon private individuals a responsibility which should have remained with the State, with the result that no matter what profits the Lotdars might derive, no part of them came to the public. If there were losses, then the losses would have to be made good at some one else's expense; the State had no concern—it had farmed out its liabilities along with its rights.

108. The Lotdars had the jungles cleared and the rivers confined by high embankments; and labourers were imported to sow the crops and to gather in the harvest. There were no schools and no hospitals; the Lotdars were generally absentees, as were many of their sub-tenants, and there was no thought of improving social conditions. In the Settlement Report it is written that drinking water has often to be fetched some ten or twelve miles. The Famine revealed the wretched conditions in which the labourers—mostly landless—lived; while more recent floods have shown how little

reliance can be placed on absentee landlords for the proper maintenance of the embankments. Apart from some isolated Forest offices and thanas there is no administration in the southern portion of the Lots, yet this area is not much more than fifty miles from Calcutta.

109. The problem has another aspect, namely, the silting of the river beds, which compels the building of even higher embankments, to the ever-growing menace of the countryside. This silting of the rivers means that the natural drainage is interfered with, and, south-east of Calcutta, between the city and Port Canning, there is a large and expanding flooded area. We are told that in the opinion of the Engineers of the Irrigation Department this flooded area will increase many-fold if no action is taken within the next decade.

110. The problems are difficult, but their solution will grow more difficult with the passing of time. The improvement of the conditions in which the people live can be taken up immediately; the big thanas can be divided; floating dispensaries can be introduced, moving in accordance with fixed, well-advertised programmes; the temporary famine hospitals can be made permanent; and others can be built. There should be hospitals for animals, and suitable accommodation should be constructed so that the departmental officers may live, without undue hardship, in the heart of their jurisdictions. These improvements will cost money, but they are long overdue, and should have been made simultaneously with the reclamation of the land.

111. Although measures of this type will do something to improve the conditions in which the cultivators live, they will not overcome the problems which arise from the fact that the leaseholders appear to have neither the inclination nor the means to effect large-scale improvements. The multitudes of co-sharers cannot even agree about the repairs to a sluice gate, let alone about major development. We therefore advise that the subsisting interests of all rent-receivers be acquired by the State at once. The problems of the locality are so urgent and so special that one of our members considers that the Sunderbans should be formed into a separate district, thereby not only affording some relief to the overloaded District Officer of the 24-Parganas, but also ensuring that the area receives specialised attention. The rest of us incline to the opinion that, for the present, it would be sufficient if a special officer were appointed who, under the control of the District Officer of the 24-Parganas, should be responsible—

(*a*) for the supervision of the introduction of the improvements which we have suggested above;

(*b*) for the formulation of a scheme for the further improvement of the area; and

(*c*) for the speedy acquisition of the interests of the rent-receivers.

112. We would also suggest that the Irrigation Department should take in hand the preparation and execution of comprehensive plans for the early draining of the water-logged area near Calcutta. There are few fields in which General and Technical Administration could find greater scope than in the removal of the social disabilities from which the cultivators in the Lot area suffer, and in the improvement of the rapidly deteriorating land between Calcutta and Port Canning.

Post of Commissioner to be abolished

113. It will be convenient at this stage to deal with the question of Commissioners, who occupy a half-way position between the Headquarters of Government and the Districts. Our recommendation is that they should be abolished.

114. We need hardly say that we have not lightly decided to recommend putting an end to an institution which has existed since 1829 and which, in the past, has played, in various roles, a most important part in the administration of Bengal. The reasons for our recommendation are briefly as follows:—

(*i*) With the growth and complexity of Governmental activities, the Division is much too large an area to be an effective unit of administration.

(*ii*) As supervisory authorities over the work of the district, as Appellate Revenue Bodies and as administrators of various statistics, Commissioners are disproportionately expensive.

(*iii*) As a bottleneck between Departments of Government and District Officers and *vice versa* they tend to retard the dispatch of public business. In many instances the Commissioner is a mere Post Office.

(*iv*) Commissioners are officers of wide and mature experience and we feel that their experience and advice can be put to better use by being made directly available at Headquarters to Ministers, who, in the nature of things, are less versed in matters of Government than were the Members whom, on the coming of Provincial Autonomy, they displaced.

Distribution of Commissioners' Duties.

115. We have examined the duties of Commissioners and we apprehend no difficulty in distributing them among other Government agencies, either existing or to be created under the proposals made in our report.

116. Commissioners' duties may be divided into three groups—

(*i*) Statutory.

(*ii*) Those performed under executive orders of Government, including those of supervision over District Officers.

(*iii*) Customary duties, such as Durbars, prize-givings and interviews.

117. The third group may be dismissed as of little significance in present-day conditions. In any event, in so far as District Officers cannot take the place of Commissioners under this head, the gap will be more than filled by visits of Ministers to the mufassal.

118. As to (*i*), these duties are either administrative or appellate. In either case, e.g., Court of Wards Act or the Revenue Sale Law, the duties could be distributed to the Board of Revenue, expanded in accordance with our recommendations made elsewhere in the Report, or to the Collector. So far as appellate functions are concerned, we think that, so far as possible, it should be established that the District Officer should be the final appellate authority in matters decided, in the first instance, by his subordinates, appeals against first instance decisions of the District Officer himself being referred to the Board of Revenue, or, if there are such cases, to the other appropriate Department of Government.

119. As to (*ii*), namely, duties carried out under executive orders of Government, the more important are (*a*) supervision of Municipalities and District Boards; (*b*) inspection of District and Subdivisional Offices. As to (*a*), in so far as this is not done by District Officers, it will be undertaken by the Inspectorate of Local Bodies which we have recommended elsewhere. As to (*b*), this will become the function and duty of the Organisation and Methods Division of the Chief Minister's Office.

120. Special arrangements will, doubtless, have to be made for the administration of the Chittagong Hill Tracts, where the Commissioner is acting on behalf of His Excellency the Governor. But, here again, there should be no particular difficulty, the Commissioner's functions as Sessions Judge being transferred to the District Judge, Chittagong, excise being handed over to the Collector, and revenue appeals in general being handled by the Board of Revenue.

121. There remains the point that if Commissioners are abolished, Government will have to consult some 30 people instead of five whenever they want either advice as to probable effect in the Districts of some policy which they are proposing to introduce or a report on the actual effect of some policy which they have introduced. We do not think that there is a great deal in this point. In the first place, it has become increasingly the practice for Government to address District Officers direct, and in any event, it is open to Government to consult, on any particular topic, a selected number of District Officers as an alternative to seeking the views of all of them.

122. After the most careful review of the whole question, we are in no doubt that the time has come to do away with the

appointment of Commissioner as a normal instrument of mufassal administration. Doubtless, in an emergency which required the reinforcement of one or more District Officers in the area affected by the emergent conditions, it would be necessary to appoint a special officer, whether called a Commissioner or not, to help to deal with the situation. We are satisfied, for example, that the Commissioner, Chittagong Division, has been of enormous value in solving the numerous problems arising through the presence of large numbers of troops in his area, and that, if the Commissioner, Chittagong, had not existed already, a somewhat similar appointment would have had to be created to deal with the situation which arose in the area following upon Japan's entry into the war.

Agricultural Crop Statistics

123. Since we have recommended the abolition of the Agricultural Development Department, it is necessary to examine the method by which and the extent to which crop statistics for which that Department are at present responsible should be collected in future. A few lines of background history are first necessary.

124. In other Provinces there is, as explained in Chapter I, a revenue staff going right down to the villages, and this staff furnishes Government with information which enables them to calculate with reasonable accuracy the agricultural yield for the Province for the year. In Bengal, no such staff exists, and the crop forecasts in this Province have tended to be little more than intelligent guesswork and the roughest of approximations. It is true that the Cadastral Survey operations which covered the Province, District by District, during the period 1901-1930, provided, *inter alia*, a statement which was accurate *at the time of compilation* of the acreage under the various crops. The first, and, so far, the only revision of these surveys was completed about three years ago for the District of Faridpur. In the remaining Districts the crop statements are anything from 15 to 44 years old, and, in the meantime, considerable changes may have taken place as a result of the reclamation of waste land, of land previously cultivated having gone out of cultivation, and, lastly, of the substitution of one kind of crop for another.

125. In consequence of the famine of 1943 and of the necessity for fitting in to the All-India Food Plan, it became necessary to obtain a very much more accurate crop statement. The task was entrusted to the Agricultural Development Department, who employed a large temporary, and a still larger part-time, staff for the purpose. The cost was about 50 lakhs. The procedure adopted was to carry out a plot-to-plot survey and from this to compile a statement showing the acreage under the important crops in the Province. The present policy of Government appears to be to repeat the same survey each year.

126. The comparison between the Cadastral Survey and the recent plot-to-plot enumeration is as follows:—

PROVINCIAL COMPARATIVE STATEMENT WITH SETTLEMENT.

(Excluding Darjeeling and Chittagong Hill Tracts.)

	Crop Survey, 1944-45.	Settlement	+ / −
	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.
Unculturable waste including water	77,74,582	72,29,850	+5,44,732
Culturable waste ..	42,92,555	53,31,186	−10,38,631
Orchards and others ..	33,23,363	22,22,462	+11,00,901
Cultivated.			
Aman paddy ..	*2,06,97,549	1,90,93,778	+16,03,771
Sugarcane ..	1,73,690	1,64,238	+9,452
Cotton ..	7,664	844	+6,820
Others ..	68,17,610	82,15,944	−14,02,334
	4,30,87,013	4,22,58,302	+8,24,711

*Including Siliguri Provincial figure is 2,07,46,275 acres.

127. The cultivated area according to the Cadastral Survey was 27,478,804 acres, that revealed by the plot-to-plot enumeration is 27,696,513 acres. If the latter figures are accurate, it shows an increase during the period of roughly 30 years of only 217,709 acres, which is less than 1 per cent. This is a strikingly low figure, though not wholly surprising having regard to the pressure on the land, which has been a feature of Bengal during the present century. There has been every inducement for the cultivator to bring all possible land under the plough. The figures show that the area under *aman* paddy has increased by about 8 per cent. since the Cadastral Survey. This increase can be explained as partly due to reclamation from waste land, but mainly due to the conversion of jute and other land into paddy land consequent upon the high price of *aman* paddy and the restrictions imposed on the cultivation of jute in recent years.

128. The outturn of crops is the product of the area under cultivation and the yield per acre. It is therefore necessary to have reasonably accurate estimates under both heads. Having regard to the very small increase in the total land under cultivation and the relatively small increase in the land under *aman* paddy as disclosed

by the above figures, there seems little justification for incurring large sums every year on a detailed plot-to-plot survey of the land under the various crops. The very nature of the land in Bengal prevents any very considerable variations in the crops grown upon it, and the possibility of any large reclamation from culturable waste depends on irrigation schemes which are not yet in sight. It is therefore safe to assume that the variation in the areas under the several crops from year to year can only be slight. The annual outturn may, however, be affected by the rainfall or floods or insect pests. Reasonably accurate information on these points can be obtained through the Circle Officers and the Union Board Clerks, the appointment of whom we have dealt with elsewhere. More accurate information will doubtless be forthcoming when the change in the land tenure system recommended by the Floud Commission has been completed and when, in consequence, there will be a complete Revenue staff on the ground. This is not to say that it will not be desirable, at intervals of, say, five to ten years, to check up on the information supplied by the Circle Officers and later by the Revenue staff. Even for this purpose, we very much doubt whether a complete plot-to-plot enumeration will be necessary. A random sampling under controlled conditions, such as have been worked out by the Indian Statistical Institute will give sufficiently reliable figures for all practical purposes.

129. It is relevant in this connection to note that the Government of Bengal have entered into an arrangement with the Institute which provides that the latter shall carry out over two more years a random sampling survey both of the areas under crops and of the yield per acre. The cost of this survey is approximately Rs.7 lakhs a year. One of us would immediately terminate that portion of the contract which relates to the area—as distinct from the yield—but in view of the difficulties in the matter of food supply which are likely to confront both Bengal and India during the next two years, the rest of us do not recommend that, even if it were possible to terminate the contract with the Institute, the random survey of either the area under crops or of the yield per acre should be abandoned. Professor Fisher, whom, as stated in the introduction to the Report, we had the privilege of interviewing, and who examined both the random sampling survey and the complete enumeration scheme, has expressed the view that the accuracy of acreage estimates by complete enumeration cannot be relied upon. It will always be necessary to obtain an estimate of the yield per acre, and such evidence as we have had suggests that crop-cutting experiments under the random sampling system is likely to give the best results.

130. Briefly, therefore, our recommendations under this head are—

(*a*) that the expensive plot-to-plot enumeration should be **abandoned;**

(*b*) that acreage survey should continue for another two years under the random sampling technique of the Indian Statistical Institute, one of our number dissenting;

(*c*) that thereafter the acreage under crops need only be calculated systematically at intervals of five or ten years;

(*d*) that the yield per acre should continue to be calculated yearly by random sampling surveys.

Jute Regulation

131. In the jute-growing areas we do not think that, at any rate for some years to come, the Circle Officers and the Union Boards will be able to undertake the operation of the Jute Regulation Act, and it is therefore necessary to consider under what administrative arrangements this should continue to be carried out. It will be necessary to retain the primary licensing assistants, but we think that the responsibility for the control of licensing, which is a matter for general administration rather than for the Department of Agriculture, should be placed under the Circle Officers who can utilise the primary licensing assistants in their spare time for general administrative duties. This will enable a considerable number of superior Jute Regulation staff to be dispensed with. Indeed, we do not think that any Jute Regulation Inspector or Assistant Inspector need exist below the level of District Headquarters.

132. It is time that we returned to Headquarters.

CHAPTER V

The Machine at Headquarters—The Structure of a Component Unit

133. In the two preceding Chapters we have been considering the Government machine as a whole. In this Chapter we shall examine the structure which is common to most of its component units at Headquarters.

Ambiguity of Terminology

134. Those of us who had no previous knowledge of the way in which the several units of a Provincial Government machine in India work found it at first more than a little difficult to understand. Part of the difficulty is one of nomenclature. The word "Department" is used in two senses. In one context it means a particular Secretariat branch of the statutory entity, the Provincial Government, and in the other an agency "subordinate" to that Government. The point was well put by one of the most experienced of the official witnesses who appeared before us. He remarked that "It is unfortunate that in the Bengal vocabulary the 'Department' has two entirely different meanings. In one sense it means the permanent or semi-permanent staff in direct relations with the responsible Minister; in another sense it means the administrative organisation charged with practical execution of policy and with day-to-day administration of a specialised subject. To my mind the confusion extends to thought as well as to terminology."

Ministries and Departments

135. For the purpose of avoiding possible ambiguity as to which part of the Governmental machine we are referring to, we propose in the rest of this Report to use the word "Ministry" to mean a Branch of the Government in the Secretariat and the word "Department" as meaning those agencies which are in charge of officers now described as "Heads of Department", e.g., the Branch of the Secretariat dealing with Health matters we shall refer to as the "Ministry of Health" and the agency in charge of the Director of Public Health as the "Public Health Department".

136. Another matter which is somewhat puzzling to those of us accustomed to a different scheme of Organisation is the concept that obtains in India of dividing Governmental activities into two almost water-tight compartments—one compartment being those of "the Provincial Government" and the other, and larger, not of Government, but of an agency "subordinate to Government". The former are, using the terminology which we have just suggested, grouped into "Ministries" and the latter into "Departments". The activities or actions of the former are in many cases, treated as those of "Government" not because of their nature but because they

happen to take place in a Ministry or because some Statute or Rule prescribes that this or that shall be done by, or shall be subject to the approval of, "Government". This means that a Department which is well able to perform a particular duty cannot do so without first consulting the Ministry to which it is "attached",—a process which makes, in certain cases, for friction and unnecessary delay. The difficulty is sometimes overcome by resort to what we cannot but regard as the artificial device of making the Head of the Department a "Secretary to Government", whereupon he becomes immediately empowered to do things which previously he could only do after obtaining the approval of the Ministry to which he is "subordinate".

Re-allocation of duties between Ministries and Departments

137. We think that the relationship between a Ministry and its Departments should be re-defined and the duties between them re-allocated. The principles to be followed are in our judgment, briefly,—

(*i*) The Ministry should be primarily responsible for policy and the Department for carrying the policy into effect. We have no doubt that, broadly this always has been the principle governing the relationships between Ministries and their Departments, but the principle has with the passage of time been so overlaid by accretions as to be now largely obscured.

(*ii*) Nothing should be referred to a Ministry to which they are not in a position to contribute anything except delay, e.g., the Ministry of Commerce, Labour and Industries are in no position themselves to decide whether the provisions of the Factory Act should be applied to a workshop employing 10 persons, yet it is the Ministry which at present has to decide on any such proposal. The matter should be left to the Chief Inspector of Factories.

(*iii*) The Ministry should undertake common services and "domestic housekeeping" for the Departments attached to it, e.g., the allocation of office accommodation.

(*iv*) The Head of a Department should, subject to the rules governing the conditions of service and discipline of civil servants generally, be given the fullest practicable control over the staff under him. Obviously, in matters affecting him personally, a Head of a Department should not be a judge of his own case and should therefore be subject to the control of the Ministry.

138. Some further clarification and illustration of the first principle are required. While the Ministry should be primarily responsible for advising the Minister on policy questions, this is not to say that Heads of Departments will have no right of, or responsibility for, suggesting changes in policy to meet changing

conditions whether they be actual. or foreseen. Conversely, a Ministry cannot wash its hands of all responsibility for seeing that policy is carried out. We have noticed a tendency on the part of the Secretariat to feel that, once they have issued Government orders, further action is entirely and solely a matter for the Attached Office. We hold this to be unsound since the authority to issue an order carries with it the responsibility of seeing that it is executed, and when a Ministry reaches a decision on principle or programme they become automatically responsible for ensuring that its rules are observed and its targets achieved. The *technical* methods of achieving these targets are, of course, a matter for the Attached Office.

139. This is perhaps a convenient place to consider the relative position of the specialist and the administrator (or, to put the matter another way, of the Head of a Department and the Secretary to the Ministry) as advisers to the Minister in charge of the portfolio. In our opinion, and here we respectfully agree with the views of the 1929-31 Royal Commission on the Civil Service in the United Kingdom, the position was correctly stated in a paper read to the "Institute of Public Administration in January, 1923, by Sir Francis Floud, who later became the Chairman of the Bengal Land Revenue Commission. This is an extract from his paper—

> "In the first place, they (i.e., specialists) have a right to demand that their advice should be sought. I have known cases in which administrative officers have come to decisions on technical questions without ever consulting the technical advisers of the Department. That is clearly indefensible and may lead to serious mistakes being made. But if the specialists are entitled to be consulted, are they also entitled to claim that their advice must be taken and acted upon? Here, I think, we must distinguish between two different classes of problems. A specialist may recommend that a particular policy should be adopted by his Department. In such a case he is not entitled to claim that his advice must be taken. Wider considerations than the intrinsic merits of the proposal have to be weighed, and it may be found that what is desirable is not expedient, and that consequently the advice of the specialist must be rejected.
>
> The other class of case is where a policy has been decided on, and a question arises as to the best method of carrying it out. If such a question raises technical issues the specialist advisers of the Department must be consulted, and in such a case their advice ought, save in very exceptional circumstances, to be taken."

140. Sir Francis Floud was, of course, writing about the Governmental Organisation in the United Kingdom, where executive departments are inside the Ministry and not outside as in India, but the principle remains the same.

Application of Principles

141. We cannot attempt here to do more than indicate in the list given below how the duties should be distributed between a Ministry and its Departments in accordance with the general principles discussed in the preceding paragraphs. The list is illustrative rather than exhaustive but gives, we think, the background against which to work out the problem in individual Ministries:—

142. The Ministry should be responsible for—

(*i*) Formulating the Ministry's general programme.

(*ii*) Preparing the budget for discussion with the Finance Department.

(*iii*) Submitting its plans to, and participating in the discussions of the Development Board.

(*iv*) Deciding the policies and principles to be employed in the execution of the programme, and the conditions under which certain aspects of it, e.g., grants, will be given effect to.

(*v*) Supervising the general progress of the execution of the Ministry's programme.

(*vi*) Watching the progress of expenditure against budget provision from *every point of view*.

(*vii*) Modifying the programmes and making any consequent budget reappropriations within the *classifications* determined by Finance.

(*viii*) Appointing the Heads of Departments and the consequent Establishment work (pay, leave, etc., of these officers).

(*ix*) Determining the content of all proposed legislation.

(*x*) Dealing with all political and Assembly and Council questions.

(*xi*) Allocating of office space and domestic house-keeping, both for itself and its attached Departments.

(*xii*) Nominating individuals to attend Conferences summoned by the Government of India or the Provinces.

143. The Head of the Department will be responsible for—

(*i*) Proposing at the beginning of the budget period the Departmental activities for the ensuing year.

(*ii*) Formulating a first draft of the Department's budget.

(*iii*) Acting as technical adviser to the Ministry.

(*iv*) Carrying out the research and experiment programme and improving the Department's techniques of work.

(*v*) Training the Department's officers in these techniques.

(*vi*) Inspecting the execution of work by Departmental District staff.

(*vii*) Allocating grants according to rules, making budget reappropriations within prescribed limits.

(*viii*) Making within approved rules all appointments, confirmations, postings, transfers and promotions of all subordinate officers, including also sanctioning leave and making acting arrangements.

(*ix*) Exercising disciplinary powers over all subordinate officers according to rules.

(*x*) Advising the Public Service Commission concerning promotions.

(*xi*) Advising the Minister on nominations to be made by Government to outside Institutions.

(*xii*) Sanctioning the attendance of officers at Conferences, other than Inter-Provincial or Government of India Conferences.

144. An allocation of work along the lines proposed above will produce, in many instances, a very different situation from that which exists at present. The work of a Ministry will become smaller in volume but more important in scope: the Department will have much more freedom to get on with its job. A Ministry will be able to concentrate on matters raising issues of policy, principle or politics: a Department will be relieved of the necessity of consulting its Ministry on matters of unimportant detail or on questions with which it is itself better qualified to deal. The general aim should be to confer on Heads of Departments the maximum amount of delegated authority other than in the policy field.

Statutes and Rules

145. We appreciate that the present distribution of duties between Ministries and Departments is, in many cases, the result of the wording of some Statute, or of the Rules made under Statute. So far as the latter are concerned, there would, we imagine, be no great difficulty in amending the Rules so as to achieve the maximum delegation of authority to Departments in accordance with the principles which we have attempted to lay down in this Chapter. So far as Statutes are concerned, we recommend that the necessary legislation should be promoted as soon as convenient. If there is likely to be undue delay in securing the necessary legislative amendments, consideration should be given to the adoption of the admittedly unsatisfactory device of making the Heads of Departments "Secretaries to Government" in respect of a range of functions to be specified in order to secure the objective aimed at. There may well be political or legal objections to the universal application of this device, and this aspect of the matter should be examined by the Judicial and Legislative Ministry.

CHAPTER VI

The Machine—Some of its Headquarters' Components

The Task of the Organisation and Methods Division

146. It was no part of our terms of reference to propose detailed complements and establishments for each Ministry and Department. In any event, it would have been quite impossible for us to have attempted such a task within the time at our disposal. Nor, indeed, have we had time to examine the general layout of all the individual Ministries and Departments.

147. Apart, however, from the time factor as affecting ourselves, Government have, by creating an Organisation and Methods Division already armed themselves with an instrument for the very purpose of working out the detailed organisation which is involved in our general recommendations in the organisational field. In some cases our recommendations will need little elaboration, since they mean merely the transfer of a complete branch from one part of the Government to another, e.g., the Appointment Branch from the Home Department to the Office of the Chief Minister. In other cases, however, an existing Branch will have to be completely disassembled and the individual parts fitted into quite different positions. In yet other cases, the whole internal organisation of a Ministry or Department has become so confused that no mere regrouping of Branches will suffice; what is required is a reshaping of the whole internal structure so as to make it better adapted to achieve the basic objectives with which the Ministry or Department is charged. These two problems are essentially problems which the Organisation and Methods Division was specially created to solve.

148. While, as indicated above, we have, in general, abstained from going into any detailed examination of the internal organisation of the individual Ministries and Departments, we have thought it desirable to offer some comments on the Revenue Department, the Board of Revenue, the Office of the Chief Minister and the Department of the Labour Commissioner. We also propose, for the sake of convenience, to deal in this Chapter with three matters which are not strictly organisation questions but which do closely affect the organisation of the Ministries and Departments which will have to handle them. We refer, first, to the tasks likely to confront the Police Authorities in the post-war period; secondly, to rural indebtedness, and, thirdly, to the Co-operative Movement. The last two pose problems, upon the solution of which the future prosperity of the agricultural community will in no small measure depend.

Revenue Department

149. We have, in Chapter III, recommended the abolition of the Revenue Department, and it is therefore necessary to indicate

broadly how its duties should be distributed. Our recommendations are as follows:—

(*i*) All functions relating to revenue and the administration of Statutes dealing with revenue questions should be handled by the expanded Board of Revenue, which we describe below. The Board of Revenue should also take over the Land Records and Survey duties of the Revenue Department, although it will be for consideration later whether these should not be transferred to the Land Reform Ministry, which we have earlier proposed should be set up.

(*ii*) We have recommended elsewhere that the Office of the Chief Minister should be responsible, *inter alia*, for common services rendered to Ministries and Departments, for general administration and for establishment questions. It follows logically that the Office of the Chief Minister should take over from the Revenue Department such functions as those of Land Acquisition, determination of boundaries, provision of office and residential accommodation required for the purposes of general administration, the allotment of funds for general administration, and appeals of Government servants against departmental orders.

(*iii*) All matters relating to loans and famine relief should be transferred to the Ministry for Agricultural Credit (and Local Self-Government).

Board of Revenue

150. Though the Board of Revenue was first constituted in 1772, it took a permanent shape in 1786 in accordance with the instructions of the Court of Directors with one of the members of the Government as President, with powers to sanction all land settlements and to give direction to the Collectors in all matters connected with collection of revenue. After undergoing several changes, the Board was finally constituted in 1871 with two members and two Secretaries and with powers to sit jointly or singly.

151. In 1909 with the creation of an Executive Council of Bengal, the Government of India proposed the abolition of the Board and suggested that a member of the Executive Council might take over its duties. This proposal was opposed by the Government of Bengal and finally the Secretary of State vetoed the proposal in 1912. As a result of the decision the Bengal Board of Revenue Act, 1913, was passed providing for one member only, and the Board is so functioning at present. After the introduction of the Provincial Autonomy all powers previously exercised by Government to entertain appeals and revise decisions in Revenue cases were transferred to the Board.

152. As at present constituted, the Board of Revenue is practically the Head of the Land Revenue administration and the final Appellate Court in all revenue matters under the provision of section 296(*2*) of the Government of India Act, 1935. The Government has thus been divested of appellate jurisdiction but still retains the charge of the administration of certain Revenue Departments, such as Excise, Opium, Salt, etc.

153. After giving the subject our fullest consideration, we have come to the conclusion that the Board of Revenue should be strengthened and should become, as it has always been meant to be, the Executive Head of all revenue earning departments and remain in charge of all matters connected with revenue. It should also be the final appellate Tribunal in revenue cases. Now that we have recommended the abolition of Commissioners, all the supervisory functions of the latter over the district administration in relation to Revenue matters will have to be performed by the Board. Some of the Revenue subjects which are still under the direct charge of the Government, such as Excise, Opium, Sales Tax, Agricultural Income-Tax, etc., should now be made over to the Board of Revenue, which should be in the Finance and Revenue Portfolio.

154. As a necessary corrollary to the above suggestion, we recommend that the Board of Revenue be strengthened by the addition of two more members. The Senior Member will be the appellate authority, and will normally sit singly; though the Board may, if occasion arises, sit jointly. We suggest that the salary of the Senior Member should be Rs.3,750, as at present, and that the other two Members should receive either grade pay, or pay in the selection grade, in accordance with the scheme we propose in a later Chapter. There should be no special pay for such members.

155. With the increase in the membership of the Board, it may be necessary to appoint an extra Secretary; the volume of work must be left to decide whether such an appointment is unavoidable; and the status of the incumbent may be similarly determined.

156. It is suggested that all Members of the Board of Revenue should be also Secretaries to Government, and that they should approach the Finance and Revenue Minister direct, without going through the Finance Secretary, save in matters with which he is vitally concerned.

Office of the Chief Minister

157. Apart from its all-important duties of securing, under the Chief Minister, the co-ordination of the activities of the Nation Building Ministries and Departments, we conceive the functions of the Office of the Chief Minister as falling into four groups, namely,—

(*i*) *Organisation and Methods Division.*—This Branch should be responsible for the proper construction of the machine. It will, for example, advise on the most

appropriate location within the Government machine of any new activity which the Cabinet may decide to undertake. It will help each Department to improve its own organisation structure, i.e., the distribution of functions and the allocation of duties to each post. It will work out the simplest procedures by which these duties will be performed; it will design necessary forms and approve demands for office machines and equipment; it will prepare the office layout; it will also measure the volume of work and suggest methods of control.

(*ii*) *Establishments.*—This branch will be responsible for determining the principles governing the staffing of the machine. It will advise on cadres and conditions of service; it will examine proposals for pay, allowances and pensions; it will also administer the Communal Ratio Rules. Besides determining these principles, Establishments will also fix standard prices and rates of supply for all goods and services common to most departments, e.g., the yardsticks governing the engagement of temporary staff, and the scale on which uniforms should be supplied. It will concern itself with ensuring that the requisite number of candidates are educated for, attracted to, and trained for the work of the Civil Service.

(*iii*) *General Administration.*—This branch should be responsible for the practical application of the above principles and rules to officers engaged in General Administration at headquarters and in the mufassal. It will, thus, appoint officers to the Bengal Civil Service and Bengal Junior Civil Service, post and transfer them, etc. It will prepare the Budget estimate for General Administration.

(*iv*) *Common Services.*—Finally there will be a group of common services, which the Chief Minister's Office will perform on behalf of all Departments, varying from the supply of stationery and furniture and allocation of office space, to such important matters as the acquisition of land and advice on publicity and propaganda .

Labour Commissioner

158. We consider that labour problems will occupy a more prominent position in the business of Government than they have hitherto done and it is therefore necessary to build up without delay a staff to deal with them which will be adequate in quantity, in status and in expert knowledge.

159. The Commissioner of Labour is, in addition to the normal duties of his post, Chairman of the National Service Labour

Tribunal, Chairman of the Unskilled Labour Committee, and Secretary to the Board of Economic Enquiry. We are advised that the National Service Labour Tribunal alone provides whole-time employment and we are not convinced of any necessity to combine these Central Government duties with those of the Provincial Government's Commissioner of Labour.

160. Apart from this, it has been made clear that too much is being demanded of the Commissioner personally. He has business, for example, with the heads of large firms on labour matters, but it is neither practicable nor necessary that all discussions on such matters should be with the Commissioner in person. On the other hand, such negotiations cannot be conducted with an assistant to the Commissioner, who cannot by his training, and status meet the firms' representative on level terms. It appears therefore as an organisational defect that the Commissioner has not got sufficient high-power deputies to whom much of his work can be delegated, leaving him free to have a general control over the whole work and to take into his own hands only such matters as demand his personal attention.

161. It has been suggested that Government should recruit from the United Kingdom officers with wide experience of conciliation work there but experience in the department indicates that the alternative scheme is more likely to be successful, that is to say, instead of bringing out officers with experience of conciliation work but no knowledge of Bengal conditions, officers with full knowledge of local conditions should be sent to England for training in conciliation work, and we commend this to Government.

162. A suggestion has been made to us that the department, in dealing with disputes, works towards the attainment of certain objectives in the field of labour conditions to the detriment of unbiassed conciliation, and therefore it was urged that the formulation of objectives should take place elsewhere than in the office of a department whose main task is conciliation. Policy is laid down in the Ministry and we do not think it practicable to have an officer enforcing policy and an independent officer undertaking conciliation without regard to that policy. Conciliation must in fact be in line with policy but, clearly, the officer doing conciliation must be of such status and experience in handling disputes that he will be above suspicion of favouring either party beyond the dictates of Government's policy and fair dealing.

Police

163. The stress we have laid elsewhere in the Report on the growing importance of development activities must not be construed to imply that we regard the maintenance of order and the investigation of crime as likely to be less important than heretofore. Rather we take the contrary view: as other activities grow

the need for investigation and suppression of criminal activities become far more insistent, while events in the comparatively recent past indicate that there can be no relaxation of the preparedness to deal promptly and firmly with all breaches of the peace.

164. On the side of criminal investigation, it has been impressed upon us that the force available for the purpose is inadequate and is in fact only able to investigate a fraction of the serious crime reported. This is particularly marked in the case of dacoities in the riverine tracts where half the dacoities are perforce ignored. Riverine thanas have been abolished and these we consider should be restored and an adequate force with suitable transport provided for the pursuit of offenders and the detection of crimes.

165. Police work is further hampered by the considerable delays in trying criminal cases. Not only do many attendances in court waste the time of police officers, but the delays are sometimes so serious that witnesses evade appearance and when, finally, they do attend, have forgotten a material part of the facts which they are expected to affirm. The police, however, themselves contribute to these delays by citing excessive numbers of witnesses and by failure to proceed with a case involving several accused until all have been arrested. We deal elsewhere with magisterial delays and would only say here that more witnesses should not be called than are necessary to establish the case and that a case should proceed at once against the accused under arrest when the apprehension of all of them is likely to involve delay.

166. A further difficulty is the inadequacy of the police staff for the prosecution of offenders in court. We think that the legal profession offers a suitable field for the recruitment of additional prosecuting inspectors or sub-inspectors. Such officers would not of course be available to be drafted to other police duties but would be employed solely as public prosecutors.

167. We have not concerned ourselves with the internal organisation of the police or with the distinction between the Bengal Police under the Inspector-General and the Calcutta Police under the Commissioner. But while we understand that the Commissioner considers his reserve inadequate on account of the extensive escorts and guards to be provided, we received a suggestion that the armed reserves of the Calcutta Police and of the Bengal Police in the Calcutta industrial area should be combined. We see no case for any reduction of the police, but we believe that the combination of these reserves into one force for use over the whole of what is commonly called Greater Calcutta and disposable by agreement between the Commissioner and Inspector-General, would permit of a greater use being made of the whole, and would in that way be more economical. We accordingly commend this suggestion to the Government.

168. We are informed that, while the force is inadequate, there is difficulty in obtaining recruits. In so far as this is attributed to the counter-attraction of high pay offered by war contractors and others and of the fighting and ancillary services, we can only regard the difficulty as a transient one.

169. The further point that pay scales are inadequate cannot easily be distinguished from the first and we can express no opinion on it, but, if, after the temporary considerations have ceased to operate, it is still found difficult to recruit on existing scales, we recommend that Government should consider as an alternative to a material all-round increase, the provision of proficiency pay which would give a higher rate of pay to all those who exert themselves to reach a certain standard of efficiency.

170. We are informed that the police are inadequately armed, particularly having regard to the likelihood that considerable numbers of the most modern small arms weapons will, as a result of the war, have found their way into improper hands. We have not enquired into this in any detail, but if Government are to get the fullest value from this force, it must be supplied with the most suitable weapons available in sufficient quantity.

171. Prompt action by the police must necessarily be handicapped by the very poor communications available to them, so that prompt action at a distant place is well-nigh impossible. Improved roads and more motor transport by road and river will contribute something, but we wish also to recommend the provision of small wireless sets for communication between headquarters and outlying stations.

172. In regard to the housing of the force, we consider that adequate police lines should invariably be provided. We visited the police lines at Mymensingh where the district reserve is well provided for. Unfortunately, we were told that those lines were rather regarded as a show-piece and were much above the average of district police lines. We consider that there is nothing extravagant about the Mymensingh lines and that all police lines should be up to this standard.

173. It has been suggested that the police should take over fire services from the A.R.P. Organisation throughout the Presidency. We do not wish to express an opinion whether the police or any other agency should take them over, but we do express the view that it would be unfortunate if the fire services now operating were broken up as soon as the A.R.P. Organisation is disbanded.

Rural Indebtedness

174. The plans being laid for rural development involve turning the whole battery of Government Departments on to villages in order to raise the standard of life there, and among the problems to be faced is that of rural indebtedness. We feel that we are not

called upon to offer a solution for that problem, but may usefully consider its nature as it is one with which the administration must be prepared to deal for some time to come.

175. The Banking Enquiry Committee estimated the quantity of this debt in 1930 at one hundred crores. We understand that, during the following decade, when prices slumped, it became a heavier burden on reduced crop and land values, while during the recent period of high prices, there has been some clearance. Direct action has been taken against it by the operation of Debt Conciliation Boards set up under the Bengal Agricultural Debtors Act and in disposing of 28 lakhs of cases, 50 crores of debt have been reduced to 18. We have been informed, however, that in many cases the instalments of repayment of the scaled down debt are not being paid and that, as a result of this legislation, credit that was previously available to *raiyats* has largely dried up.

176. We consider that the problem of rural debt cannot be solved or even considered apart from rural credit and other factors of village finance and wealth. If agriculture for any reason becomes more profitable, the burden of debt is reduced, and if agriculture can be financed on easier terms, again the *raiyat's* position is eased.

Rural finance is provided from four sources—

(*i*) Co-operative credit.

(*ii*) Agriculturist and Land improvement loans from Government.

(*iii*) Credit sales of agricultural requirements by the Agriculture Department.

(*iv*) Private moneylenders and bankers.

177. We deal subsequently with the co-operative organisation and need only remark here that it is not at present able to finance agriculture on a large scale.

178. Government's loans have been largely directed to the relief of distress, and though it might be practicable for Government to provide more than in the past, we consider that prompter repayment should be insisted on, but, even then, we do not think it practicable or advisable for Government itself to attempt to finance agriculture fully.

179. Credit sales of the Agriculture Department are on the whole not a very material contribution to the need.

180. So long as agriculture is carried on largely on advances, it is quite necessary that non-Government sources of finance should be restored. The provisions of the Bengal Agricultural Debtors Act may have given some temporary relief, but legal restrictions on moneylending and the arbitrary reduction of legal dues have the effect of reducing credit and of making the terms of unavoidable

borrowing more onerous. We consider it will have no lasting benefit if a *raiyat's* credit is greatly reduced before attempts are made to educate him more fully in the ways of prudence and simple arithmetic. We recommend that all cases now pending before debt settlement boards be immediately transferred to special officers for disposal, and that all operations under the Act be concluded as expeditiously as possible.

181. The solution of the problem does not lie in the power of any one department nor will legislation provide more than a small contribution to it. We consider that it can only be solved by the concerted action of several departments to make agriculture more profitable, to ensure adequate finance on the easiest terms practicable, and to provide education in a wide sense.

182. It is primarily for the Agriculture Department to show the way to more profitable cultivation. The Co-operative Department's efforts to ensure a more efficient co-operative credit system and the provision of Government loans under the Agriculturist and Land Improvement Loans Acts will have their influence on other loans, although they cannot for many years expect to meet more than a fraction of the funds required to finance the agriculture of the Province. The education to which we refer, includes of course elementary scholastic education, but it is much more than that. It is idle to blame the money-lender for imposing onerous terms when only a fraction of his loans are repaid, and until the *raiyat* can be made to realise that the terms on which he can borrow depend largely on himself, that, until he has established a reputation for prompt repayment in full, without the expenses of coercion, he cannot hope to borrow on the most favourable terms. The efforts of the Education Department must, therefore, be backed by constant educative propaganda by the Agriculture and Co-operative Departments.

183. In so far, however, as the effort to reduce rural indebtedness requires unitary guidance and the problem calls for centralised guidance and a common policy, we have included, in a single Ministry, all aspects of rural credit, indebtedness and relief.

Co-operation

184. A Co-operative Society is generally accepted to be a voluntary association of persons on terms of equality in order to secure the satisfaction of some common need. Essentially the co-operative movement is an economic one and its history leaves no doubt, whether one looks to the Rochdale Pioneers who started co-operative stores, or to the Raiffeissen banks in German villages, or to the fruit-growers of California, or to the agricultural societies in Denmark, that societies were devised to meet the hard practical difficulties of many poor people. The aim is an economic advantage to the members and "co-operation" is itself one form of business organisation. The fact that successful co-operative

effort produces moral effects fostering thrift, self-reliance, honesty, etc., is a side issue though important enough to influence the policy of Government and to justify some State assistance. These moral effects are elusive and cannot be caught by direct attack but will be secured if the economic problem is successfully pursued by honest co-operation.

185. Co-operation is concerned neither with charity nor politics and attempts to use a co-operative organisation for political ends cannot fail to harm it, equally with the philanthropist anxious to help everybody with some one else's money. It is quite useless to attempt to help *raiyats* or any one else through co-operative banks, credit societies or any other societies, unless the greatest care is taken to see that those banks and societies are conducted in such a manner as to ensure their permanent success and stability.

186. In forming societies account must be taken of the education and mental calibre of the members, not of the few highly-trained individuals who go round and easily persuade them to join societies. One cannot expect a villager to take of his own accord a long-sighted view of his personal finance and deliberately borrow only his immediate minimum needs, use the money frugally and by repaying promptly build up his personal credit so that he is able to borrow again and again to meet short term requirements from an organisation which by his own foresight and business acumen will be so run that it can in fact meet his short term requirements at short notice. He is commonly an uneducated person with little experience outside his village, living from hand to mouth at a low standard.

187. At the central banking level one cannot have, at the present stage, sound management when the business is almost entirely in the hands of the borrowers and, though adequate deposits may be forthcoming whether by the persuasion of departmental officers or in the belief that Government will back up the bank, permanent success cannot be ensured until it is certain that the funds will be properly handled and prompt repayment in full insisted upon. It is in the co-operative spirit that no man should be driven to pay when it is manifestly only possible by reducing him to complete penury, but it can only bring discredit on all concerned if he is not required and compelled to make repayment to the fullest extent practicable. It does not appear in Bengal that recovery has even approached that limit, and misguided solicitude for the borrower appears to have been carried to great lengths by the societies concerned.

188. On the other hand it is clear that a large number of credit societies have obtained a loan, divided it among such of its members as could get a share of it, and have done nothing more about it. It has in fact been further stated that in many cases loans shown to have been disbursed to members never in fact reached them, the cash having been misappropriated by intermediaries in the village.

189. Co-operation is of course not confined to credit organisations and it is capable of application to very many spheres of activity both for producers and consumers. In the former are included various marketing societies while the latter include stores of various type. The organisation of such societies can be justified if a careful examination of the economics shows that they can be expected to run, after meeting all expenses, at a profit to the participants. It is not justifiable to organise societies, which have to be subsidised by Government, merely to cut out middlemen who, in fact, are performing a service commensurate with their earnings. Such subsidies must be justified, if at all, on other grounds, such as the provision of a better milk supply, or assistance to an impoverished section of the community. The organisation of all such societies involves an intelligent and thorough examination of the economics of the situation to ensure that the business has the requisite prospect of success. Slapdash methods only achieve success by chance.

190. To make a success of a co-operative society four provisions are therefore necessary—

(1) The objective must be economically practicable.

(2) There must be a few persons with sufficient energy, knowledge, education and honesty to conduct the affairs of the society adequately and willing to do so.

(3) There must be persistent tuition and propaganda until the prospective members, and indeed members, realise the rudiments of co-operative principles, which are, in our view, clearly set out in Calvert's book (The Law and Principles of Co-operation): they must understand what the object of the society is and how it is to be achieved.

(4) There must be adequate supervision over the business of the society to ensure that it is running on sound lines and that everyone concerned is attending to his business.

These are the basic requirements to ensure a passable standard.

191. The movement in Bengal is at present at a low ebb. One cannot obliterate the past and start again. Even if all existing societies were liquidated and a fresh start made the stigma of failure and discredit in the co-operative field would remain as a handicap on future effort. Nor is there any substitute for co-operative effort, and the organisation of agricultural banks strictly on the lines of the Credit Agricole in Egypt would only cover a part of the field. We understand however that a proposal to modify the constitution and business of the existing apex and central banks, incorporating some of the provisions of the Egyptian agricultural banks is being put forward for examination. We have not examined these suggestions in detail but we think them worthy of serious attention.

192. The task ahead is therefore the dual one of reviving what is almost a corpse and of training the co-operative body to take a

more active part in the life of the people. The Co-operative Department which must perform this task is circumscribed as well as empowered by the Co-operative Societies Act and the Rules. Each member of the staff will have his allotted task and we have elsewhere in this report indicated the necessity for training and for providing essential facilities so that he may work efficiently.

193. We wish also to draw attention to Mr. (now Sir Malcolm) Darling's report on the co-operative movement in Bengal and his recommendations. These modest suggestions have not been carried out and while he recommended the appointment of an I.C.S. officer as additional Deputy Registrar not only has that appointment not been made but when the existing Deputy Registrar was appointed as Registrar, the Deputy Registrar's post which he had filled has been left vacant.

194. We have not examined in detail the organisation of this department but we understand that it is at present understaffed and is consequently unable to cope with the 40,000 societies now in existence, and a part of the work of supervision is at present done by supervisors appointed by central banks: these employees are in our view underpaid and ill-equipped to perform this task. We think that better results would be obtained if their status was improved and their work correlated by unitary control with that of the departmental officers. While Credit Societies constitute the bulk of the present organisation and though they are generally simple in form it will require the undivided attention of a considerable staff to nurse them back to efficiency. The non-credit societies on the other hand involve many diverse economic organisational and technical problems. This we consider indicates the desirability of making a clear division of the department below the Registrar's level into a credit side and a non-credit side.

195. Our attention has been drawn to the case regarding the settlement of "disputes" and the view has, we understand, been held that attempts to recover a debt by filing a "dispute" petition before the Registrar are nullified if the debtor admits his debt as there is then no dispute. We consider that this should be put beyond doubt, if necessary by amending the law as has been done in the Bombay and other Acts.

196. The Co-operative Department constantly comes into touch with other departments interested in the welfare of the people and in relation to such departments it must be regarded as in the nature of a service department. When a department is of opinion that the formation of a co-operative society may meet a problem in which it is interested, it is not sufficient simply to say "form a co-operative society" and to throw the whole problem at the Co-operative Department. The Co-operative Department's part is to ensure the application of co-operative principles and the setting up of a sound business organisation but when the problem in question is such as to call for technical knowledge, the department concerned must

supply the technical assistance required and not expect to hand over the whole supervision and conduct of the society to the Co-operative Department.

197. To ensure that the Co-operative Department comes in where it is needed, the Registrar will as occasion arises attend meetings of the Development Board while at the district level it will be for the District Officer to direct the attention of the Assistant Registrar and his staff to particular problems and to see that they make adequate progress but the actual organisation of co-operative societies will remain in the hands of the Co-operative Department. The District Officer cannot, against co-operative advice, direct that a particular society be registered and it is particularly important to avoid the ill-advised hasty formation of many societies as has evidently occurred in the past. It must be realised that co-operation is not a magic wand which will obliterate business difficulties, economic problems and human frailties. A hard-headed Collector with drive could however contribute much both by restraint and drive to the success of the movement, but we consider it quite unreasonable that the District Magistrate or Subdivisional Officer should run any Central Bank. Not only is it unfair to put him in a position which would imply that he has for the affairs of the bank the responsibility which is generally inherent in the position of Chairman of the Board of Directors, but also few District Magistrates have the technical knowledge necessary to direct the operation of a bank.

198. The views we have expressed in this Chapter may be summarised in the following recommendations:—

(1) Co-operative Societies should be run as sound business concerns—only by so doing can permanent success be achieved or co-operative ideals realised.

(2) Co-operative Societies should only be formed when there are available persons capable of managing the society.

(3) Constant educative propaganda should be carried on among the villagers.

(4) There should be greater strictness in enforcing repayment of loans.

(5) The preponderating voice of the borrowers in the management of banks should be greatly reduced.

(6) Non-credit societies should only be formed after a careful examination of the economic and technical problems involved.

(7) There should be no further delay in carrying out Sir Malcom Darling's main recommendations.

(8) There must be an adequate trained staff to carry out all the duties of the Co-operative Department.

(9) The supervisory staff provided by Central Banks should be co-ordinated with the departmental staff under unitary control and its status and efficiency greatly improved.

(10) The department below the Registrar should be organised in two distinct parts dealing respectively with credit and non-credit societies.

(11) Non-credit societies should be organised in collaboration with other technical departments concerned; but the supervision of such societies should unless there are very exceptional circumstances remain with the Co-operative Department.

(12) Co-ordination with other departments will be seen to at the provincial level by the Development Board and at the district level by the District Officer.

(13) The District Magistrate and Subdivisional Officer should not be required to manage any co-operative bank but the District Magistrate's driving power should be behind the district effort.

(14) The law regarding disputes should be clarified.

CHAPTER VII

Manning the Machine

A.—PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

199. However well designed the machine and however skilfully constructed its component parts may be, it will fail to deliver its full power unless it is manned by competent and trained operators.

200. The activities and responsibilities of Government have become, and will increasingly become, such that they require personnel of the highest quality—competent, well trained, skilled by reason of long experience of the duties they are required to perform, loyal, devoted to their duty, of undoubted integrity, and assured of freedom from the disrupting influences of personal and political patronage. It is the purpose of this Chapter to examine how these requirements can be met.

Increased tenure of the higher Secretariat posts

201. It will be appropriate to begin by considering the key posts in the Administration, namely, those held by Secretaries to Government. We are quite satisfied that the system whereby Secretaries normally change every four years or so is ill adapted to present day conditions. The system doubtless worked well enough when the problems of Government were simpler than they are today and will be tomorrow, and when the holders of the various portfolios were themselves civil servants chosen for their ability and mature experience. With the increasing complexity of Government business and with the periodical advent to office of Ministers who may have had no previous experience of public administration, it is essential that the principal advisers of Government should be officers of ripe experience of the matters about which they are expected to tender advice. Another defect in the present arrangements is that the Secretary or Deputy Secretary tends to be at the mercy of his own "Office" and of the Head of the Department attached to his Ministry.

202. We are emphatically of the opinion that a change in the present system is essential and urgent and that the aim should be to secure a much longer tenure for Secretaries than is the case today. Our proposal to that end is that in the fifteenth year of service of an officer of the Indian Civil Service who has already had some three years experience of the Secretariat, it should be decided (the officer's own wishes in the matter being one of the factors entering into the decision) whether he should thenceforward spend the rest of his service in the Secretariat. We contemplate that, so far as possible, a Secretary should be appointed to that Ministry in which he had previously served.

203. We fully recognise that the proposal which we have just made throws up a problem of the equalisation of the prospects of those officers chosen for a Secretariat career and those not so chosen. It is a problem to which we venture to think we have suggested a reasonable solution in the Chapter dealing with "Conditions of Service".

Bengal Civil Service Officers in the Secretariat

204. As with the Indian Civil Service, so with the Bengal Civil Service we think that arrangements should be made to secure a longer period of service for those members of the Bengal Civil Service who have, during the tenure of an Assistant Secretary's appointment, shown a special aptitude for Secretariat duties. Here, too, we propose that the decision should be taken about the fifteenth year of service. The effect on the careers of Bengal Civil Service officers is also dealt with in our Chapter on "Conditions of Service".

The Staffing of Technical Departments

205. It is as important to provide competent staff for the Technical Branches as for the Administrative Branches of Government. It has been represented to us that the provincialisation of the cadres of the Technical Services has led to a serious falling off in the standard of recruits to these Services. We are told that in practice the normal entry to a Senior Provincial Technical Service is now *via* the *Subordinate* Provincial Technical Service, and we are also told that able young men, otherwise inclined towards, and well qualified for, a technical career in the public service choose to compete for the Bengal Civil Service (or Bengal Police Service) with its guaranteed career, rather than for a Subordinate Technical Service with the knowledge that for the attainment of a career comparable to that of the Bengal Civil Service they will have to face the hurdle of promotion, "A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush".

206. We cannot think that it is good for the public service in the Province that all the most promising young men in the Universities are diverted from a technical career under Government, and we recommend that a percentage of the posts in the senior Provincial Services should be reserved for direct recruits. We are aware that such direct recruitment is, in certain cases, already provided for, but the recruitment is normally confined to candidates who are required to have considerable experience of the duties of the post to be filled, experience which the young man leaving the University clearly cannot possess. The general aim should be reasonably to equate, at any rate up to a tolerably high level in the public service the careers of the administrator and the technical specialist.

207. In the preceding two paragraphs we have been considering the normal position. In the years immediately ahead, a considerable expansion of the technical services may be anticipated, and it would in our opinion be a serious mistake to fill all or even a large proportion of the higher posts by promotion from relatively inexperienced and less qualified officers already in the Service. In a rapidly expanding cadre it would be sound to fill a percentage of the higher technical posts by the recruitment of officers on contract for limited periods. They would, on the expiry of their contracts, be replaced by permanent officers who, in the interval, would have acquired the requisite experience.

Recruitment to the Upper Division of Clerical Assistants in the Secretariat

208. The present position is that the Upper Division of each Secretary's office has been stabilised so as to comprise 50 per cent. promotees and 50 per cent. direct recruits; casualties in either class being replaced by a promotee or a direct recruit as the case may be.

209. It was the unanimous opinion of the Secretaries whom we consulted that the present system of recruitment does not yield satisfactory results. There was not the same unanimity regarding the remedy but it was generally agreed that the direct recruit tended to regard himself as a superior being and that man for man Government got far better value from the promotee. With the exception of the post of Head Reference Clerk, which may be held by an Upper Division Assistant, all Upper Division Assistants are employed on what is commonly referred to as correspondence work —i.e., the noting on and disposal of cases. The duties of a correspondence clerk or "dealing assistant" are set out in sections 123-136 of the Secretariat Manual, 1924, and his duties are identical whether he is an Upper Division or a Lower Division Assistant. The fact of the matter is that the correspondence clerks of a section, branch or Department in the Secretariat constitute a team sanctioned for the disposal of the clerical work dealt with in that section, branch or Department and it is very largely fortuitous which member of the team comes to deal with a particular case or class of cases. There is a prescribed ratio governing the number of higher posts but as the duties of all correspondence clerks are identical, this ratio is primarily designed to ensure prospects which experience has shown will attract the right sort of recruit.

210. In these circumstances, we recommend that direct recruitment to the Upper Division of the Secretariat be abolished and all vacancies in the Upper Division be filled by promotion.

Communal Ratio Rules

211. We have no desire to question, nor indeed do our terms of reference permit of our questioning, the soundness of the declared policy of Government in respect of communal reservation, but we

feel very strongly, and we would emphasize that in this matter we are unanimous, that in the filling of highly technical posts it would be a serious mistake, and one that will jeopardise the high hopes we entertain for the future of the Province, to rest content with anything short of the best men, irrespective of the community to which they belong.

212. There is provision in the Communal Ratio Rules for the exemption from the operation of the rules of "such services and posts as may, from time to time, by general or special order be exempted by Government", and we cannot urge too strongly that Government should exercise their discretion so as to ensure that all highly technical posts are filled by the best men available, irrespective of caste or creed.

213. Our attention was drawn to certain noting that suggested that in some Departments there is some doubt regarding the intention underlying the prescription of minimum qualifications.

214. In our view, the prescription of minimum qualifications in recruitment rules is intended primarily to save the time of the selecting agency, and to limit the number of candidates to manageable proportions. If for any reason the showing of a particular candidate who possesses the minimum academic qualifications is such that the Commission deem him unfit for the duties of the appointment in question, he cannot be regarded as a "qualified candidate" within the meaning of the explanation to rule 10 of the Communal Ratio Rules. If this is not in fact the provision of the rule as it now stands, we recommend the amendment of the rule so as to bring it into line with what we regard as the obvious commonsense view.

Maintenance of Efficiency

215. In our judgment a much more robust attitude should be adopted to those civil servants who are adjudged to be inefficient. An adverse report in the Character Roll is not at present treated as disqualifying an officer from passing an efficiency bar, still less as a ground for withholding an annual increment. Indeed, we have seen a statement to the effect that "mere inefficiency is no bar to crossing the efficiency bar". We are strongly of the view that no increment should be granted to a civil servant whose service during the preceding year has been deemed to be unsatisfactory and we do not think that the stoppage of an increment should be dependent on the institution of proceedings against the officer concerned, although he should, of course, be shown a copy of the adverse report on the basis of which it is proposed to stop his increment and be given an opportunity to appeal against the report.

216. So far as efficiency bars are concerned, the passing of the bar should depend not on the absence of an unsatisfactory report but on the positive statement of the reporting officer that the service

of the officer reported on has been such as to justify the passing of the bar. We understand that this is the rule at present, but it is so weakly applied that it is, for practical purposes, inoperative.

217. Cases of persistent inefficiency which the officer concerned had made no serious attempt to remedy should be treated by dismissal from the service, or at least by compulsory retirement.

Service Morale

218. Morale in the Public Service is compounded of many factors—reasonable conditions of service, satisfactory conditions of work, the feeling that one is part of an efficient machine and doing a worthwhile job in the service of the community; and, lastly, that one's worth will be judged and one's advancement be determined with reference solely to one's ability and zeal in the discharge of one's duty. It is in respect of this last factor that we have observed anxiety and disquiet in the minds of several witnesses who gave evidence before us.

219. We have been told that there has been a marked deterioration in the morale of the services as a result of the impact of political forces on the framework of the permanent administration. The services apprehend that amenability to Ministerial pressure and a "correct" attitude towards questions in which the Party for the time being in office is particularly interested are more likely to lead to promotion than administrative efficiency.

220. In the section dealing with the Public Service Commission we have, in order to protect Ministers against the suspicion that they have abused their position, recommended that Ministers should have no hand whatever in appointments, promotions, transfers or postings below certain levels. This is no less important for the purpose of rehabilitating the morale of the services and restoring the incentive to thorough and honest service. The apprehensions of the services must be allayed and they must be shown that promotion still depends on merit.

221. In the United Kingdom it is a serious offence for a Government servant to address a Minister with a view to securing some personal advantage. We feel the need for a similar rule in Bengal, and we recommend the amendment of the Government Servants' Conduct Rules so as to make it an offence for a Government servant to seek a personal advantage from a Minister.

Attitude to the Public

222. We received, with surprise and regret, evidence from more than one source that the attitude of some civil servants towards the public left much to be desired. It was alleged that they adopt an attitude of aloof superiority, appear to pay greater regard to the mechanical operation of a soulless machine than to promoting the welfare of the people and look upon themselves as masters rather than as servants of the public. That this is the

attitude and outlook of the average civil servant we do not believe, but the feeling to which we have referred is held too strongly not to have some basis of fact. Such an outlook and attitude is, of course, entirely wrong, and contrary to the traditions of the Service. It must be impressed upon the offending minority that they are the servants and not the masters of the public, who, incidentally, are their paymasters, that they should behave towards the public with civility and courtesy and with every desire to help rather than to obstruct. The necessity for cultivating such an attitude should form part of the training courses which we recommend below, especially for those whose duties are likely to bring them into daily contact with the public.

B.—BRIBERY AND CORRUPTION

223. Petty corruption on the part of minor officials appears to be endemic in Bengal as it is in most other parts of India. With such exceptions, however, it is generally acknowledged that, formerly, the public service in Bengal enjoyed a high reputation for integrity, but that, in recent years, the position has greatly deteriorated, especially since the war began seriously to affect India. The war here, as elsewhere, breeds conditions which make money making easy. Particularly did this become so when the supply of commodities became so short that Government was forced to grant licences to trade in them. The possession of a licence became a thing of high value and dishonest and unscrupulous persons did not hesitate to offer bribes in order to secure the licence to trade in the commodities affected. The power to grant licences was in many cases in the hands of temporary staffs not versed in the traditions of the Service, with no prospect of a permanent career in it and provided with an opportunity for making easy money which many of them found it impossible to let slip.

Causes

224. War conditions thus provided the opportunity, but it cannot be denied that it became all too easy for dishonest men to seize the opportunity of illicit gain by reason of two things, namely, (*a*) ill-advised administrative action; (*b*) defects in the Law which make detection of offences difficult and which provide inadequate penalties for convicted offenders.

225. To take these two points in turn. The power to grant licences to deal in commodities in short supply was conferred on subordinates and temporary officials, with little or no attempt being made to lay down rules prescribing to whom, and in what circumstances, licences should be granted. The commodities being in short supply, common sense would suggest that permits should at least have been confined to reputable *bona fide* dealers in the commodities concerned. Indeed, the sensible course would have been, as was in fact done in the United Kingdom, to reduce rather

than to increase the number of authorised dealers. Nothing of the sort seems to have been attempted in Bengal, and people, often of ill-repute, rushed in to obtain permits to purchase commodities in which they had never dealt before and in which they had no intention of trading, except in the black-market. The profits obtainable were so enormous that applicants for permits had no hesitation in offering bribes far too tempting for officials on relatively low rates of pay to resist.

226. Examples of the defects in the Law are—

(1) offences under sections 161 and 165 of the Indian Penal Code are non-cognisable; which means that even if the Police hear that a bribe is to pass, they can do nothing about it until they secure the permission of a Magistrate to make the investigation. The delay in securing such permission may render effective action impossible;

(2) the penalties provided are in certain cases quite inadequate, e.g., the offerer of a bribe which has been resisted is subject to a maximum penalty of nine months' imprisonment.

227. So widespread has corruption become, and so defeatist is the attitude taken towards it, that we think that the most drastic steps should be taken to stamp out the evil which has corrupted the public service and public morals. Anything less is a denial of justice to the poor people of the Province, who comprise the bulk of its population and who, in the end, have to pay for the bribes which go to enrich the unscrupulous and the dishonest.

Remedies

228. Like the causes, the remedies are both administrative and legal. Under the former, we recommend—

(*i*) that the greatest care should be taken in selecting officers authorised to grant permits, and that the rules prescribing the basis on which permits should be granted should be drawn up with the greatest precision;

(*ii*) that officers should exercise the strictest supervision of those staffs employed on duties likely to expose them to temptation. In such cases, the officers in charge should inspect their offices not only frequently but thoroughly;

(*iii*) that much more resolute action should be taken in any case where suspicion is aroused. Evidence has been tendered to us that, at present, officers in authority are little disposed to pursue *prima facie* cases for investigation;

(*iv*) that public servants should be enjoined to report at once any case where they have been offered illegal gratification;

(*v*) that where a public servant has been convicted of corrupt practices, he should be instantly dismissed and there should be no question of a grant to either him or his family of a compassionate gratuity, such as has happened in at least one case brought to our notice.

229. So far as the Law and legal processes are concerned, we propose—

(*i*) that offences under sections **161** and **165** of the Indian Penal Code should be made cognisable;

(*ii*) that section **162** of the Criminal Procedure Code should be amended to provide that statements made to a police officer in the course of an investigation into a case of bribery shall be available for use as evidence. The immediate reaction of an offender on being caught red-handed by the police is much more likely to represent the truth than statements he may subsequently make when he has had time for reflection;

(*iii*) that the Law should be amended on the lines of the United Kingdom Prevention of Corruption Act, 1906. This Act provides that, where any money, gift or other consideration has been paid or given to any person in the employment of His Majesty, or any Government Department, by any person or agent of a person holding or seeking to obtain a contract, the money, gift or consideration shall be deemed to have been paid or given or received corruptly, unless the contrary is proved. In brief, this means that, if money, etc., has passed between a public servant and a member of the public with whom he is in official relations, the onus of proof that the gift was innocent lies upon the offerer and the receiver of the gift. We have been told that many cases have arisen in Bengal where it could be shown that money had passed between a member of the public and a public servant, but that it was difficult to obtain proof that the money had been offered corruptly;

(*iv*) that a new offence should be created providing that, if a public servant or his dependants are known to have become possessed of a sudden accretion of wealth, the public servant concerned would be deemed guilty of the offence unless he could prove that the accretion of wealth was innocently obtained. This is, of course, a wide extension of the provisions of section 9(*1*) of Ordinance 29 of 1943. Such offences might well be tried by a Tribunal on the lines of that set up under the Ordinance mentioned.

230. If there is likely to be substantial delay in securing the necessary amendments in legislation to give effect to the above proposals, application should be made for effect to be given to them by Ordinance or a Defence of India Rule.

Protection of Public Servants

231. We are very sensible that the proposals we have made may expose a public servant to harassment and mischievous allegations. We propose to provide for this in two ways:--

(*i*) If under sections 161 and 165 of the Indian Penal Code, the offences are made cognisable, the Police should inform, confidentially, the superior officer of a suspected civil servant of the fact that they are starting an investigation; such notification should be made within 24 hours of the investigation being started.

(*ii*) Before a case is brought against a public servant in the Courts, the permission of Government should be obtained, after consultation with the Legal Remembrancer or the Public Service Commission, who, we have ascertained, would be willing to undertake the duty.

Effect of Public Opinion

232. The remedies which we have suggested above are directed to a short term treatment of the evil which has grown up. The ultimate sanction rests in a complete change of public opinion towards the offering and taking of bribes by members of the public and public servants respectively. Such offences should be regarded as a crime against the community.

Restoration of the Traditions of the Public Service

233. The lead should be taken by public servants themselves. They should once more be brought to regard bribery and corruption as the grossest dereliction of duty and the foulest slur on the traditions of the Service. Public servants should indeed go further. They should not only be honest, but should avoid placing themselves in a position in which they might be suspected of dishonesty. We cannot, we think, do better than quote extracts from a Report of a Board of Enquiry which was set up in 1928 to investigate certain statements affecting members of the Home Civil Service:

"56. The first duty of a Civil Servant is to give his undivided allegiance to the State at all times and on all occasions when the State has a claim upon his services. With his private activities the State is in general not concerned, so long as his conduct therein is not such as to bring discredit upon the Service of which he is a member. But to say that he is not to subordinate his duty to his private interests, nor to make use of his official position to further those interests, is to say no

more than that he must behave with common honesty. The Service exacts from itself a higher standard, because it recognises that the State is entitled to demand that its servants shall not only be honest in fact, but beyond the reach of suspicion of dishonesty. It was laid down by one of His Majesty's Judges in a case some few years ago that it was not merely of some importance but of fundamental importance that in a Court of Law justice should not only be done, but should manifestly and undoubtedly be seen to be done; which we take to mean that public confidence in the administration of justice would be shaken if the least suspicion, however ill-founded, were allowed to arise that the course of legal proceedings could in any way be influenced by improper motives. We apply without hesitation an analogous rule to other branches of the public service. A Civil Servant is not to subordinate his duty to his private interests; but neither is he to put himself in a position where his duty and his interests conflict. He is not to make use of his official position to further those interests; but neither is he so to order his private affairs as to allow the suspicion to arise that a trust has been abused or a confidence betrayed. These obligations are, we do not doubt, universally recognised throughout the whole of the Service; if it were otherwise, its public credit would be diminished and its usefulness to the State impaired."

C.—TRAINING

Preliminary Training

234. It is now recognised that training is an essential activity in any well-organised administration. So far as the Services are concerned, Government have already accepted this principle in the Training College at Sardah for Police, and the Settlement Camp Training for Civil Service personnel. The training that has been given in the past, generally speaking reflected the earlier conception of Government responsibilities as being primarily concerned with Law and Order and Revenue. We do not wish to suggest that either the Collection of Revenue or the maintenance of Law and Order has diminished in importance but it is clear that "Nation Building" activities must receive greater attention in the future than they have in the past. If our scheme of establishing a machinery that will effectively provide for the welfare of the people is to be successfully carried out, it is necessary that the men who man the machine should have a clear conception of their wider duties, and we suggest that, in future, the initial training of an officer should embrace, not only the Magisterial and Collector functions, but also his responsibilities in the Development field. His training should also include instruction by experts upon the main outlines and fundamentals of such activities as Health, Agriculture, Irrigation, Education, etc. He should also be given

to understand that his efficiency will be judged as much by his ability to succeed in Development plans as by his ability to execute his duties as a Magistrate and Collector.

Mid-career Training

235. Mid-career training is of importance in selected cases. If, for example, an officer is, exceptionally, made Secretary to a Ministry concerned with technical activities of which he has had little previous experience, it would be wise for him to spend, say, three months in the technical department attached to his new Ministry.

Short Technical Course for Non-technical Officers

236. The technical work in the District will, of course, in general, be done by specialist technical officers. The junior general administration officer will be given, during his training, a general knowledge of individual technical activities which will enable him to appreciate what is being or can be done. There are certain directions however in which it will be extremely useful to extend his training. A Circle Officer, for example, could, with advantage, take one of the short courses of training provided at the All-India Institute of Hygiene, where Hygiene and Health instruction particularly useful to a District Officer could be imparted.

Training of Officers already in service

237. A large number of young officers recruited since the war have had no special initial training, and, as a result of war conditions, little of the supervision normal in peace time. For such officers, special courses should be arranged, covering the basic principle of administration as well as laying emphasis on the welfare policies of Government.

Technical Officers

238. Just as administrative officers require to be given some insight into the technical activities of Departments in the Development field, so should the training of technical officers embrace the imparting of knowledge about the main policies of Government and of the working of the Administrative machine. An important part of their training should be directed to "putting across" their activities to those whom their activities seek to serve, e.g., the course given to an agricultural demonstrator should include, unless it does so already, teaching him how to express himself clearly and to answer questions from an argumentative cultivator.

Higher Technical Training

239. It is desirable also that technical officers should have opportunities of keeping up-to-date in their knowledge of developments, theoretical and practical, in their own subject. The

sabbatical year allowed in many Universities to teaching staff recognises the need for such staff to keep abreast of the latest ideas.

There is equal justification for affording periodical opportunities to technicians to bring their technical knowledge up to date. We suggest that selected technical officers should be given study leave more frequently than has been the case in the past. Such study leave should of course be definitely correlated with their work and should not merely be for the sake of acquiring academic distinctions.

Clerical Staff—Initial Training

240. The necessity of training clerical staff is as great as that of training of administrative and technical personnel, and we think that a short course before the recruit joins his new office will be time and money well-spent. The course should cover instruction in the general working of a Government office, office-procedures, the functions of the reference section, simple noting, the use of the principal manuals and codes, the use of the telephone, office discipline, etc. The Government of Madras started some time ago a scheme of training their clerks in courses lasting three months, and we have been told that the scheme has been a great success; in the United Kingdom a very comprehensive scheme of training for all classes of civil servants has been set on foot. We recommend that one of the first tasks of the Establishment Division which we have proposed should form part of the Chief Minister's Office, should be to work out a scheme of training both at Headquarters and in the Districts. We commend to the study of the Establishment Division the recently published Report of the Committee on the Training of Civil Servants in the United Kingdom (Command 6525).

D.—THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

Introductory

241. All the self-governing parts of the Commonwealth have Public Service Commissions. They vary widely in their scope and authority, and in certain cases possess powers, independent of the Government, to fix complements, determine gradings and make promotions. But they have one common purpose, namely, to free all appointments to the public service from nepotism and the exercise of political patronage.

242. The Bengal Public Service Commission was established in 1937, and in the beginning it was natural to limit the field within which it was required to operate, with the result that many appointments have hitherto been excluded from its purview. We think that the time has come to extend its operations, and we make recommendations to that end below.

Extension of the Scope of the Commission's Recruitment Functions

243. Sub-section (*3*) of section 266 of the Government of India Act, 1935, lays down, *inter alia*, that subject to any regulations the Governor may make, the Provincial Public Service Commission shall be consulted—

"(*b*) on the principles to be followed in making appointments to civil services and posts and in making promotions and transfers from one service to another and on the suitability of candidates for such appointments, promotions or transfers."

244. In the matter of recruitment (or first appointment) we consider the objective should be to bring within the scope of the Public Service Commission as wide a field of recruitment as the Commission can conveniently handle.

245. We therefore recommend—

(*i*) the cancellation of Regulation 31A by which the recruitment of Sub-Registrars has been removed from the purview of the Commission; and

(*ii*) the amendment of the Regulations so as to bring within the purview of the Commission direct appointments to any service or post the initial pay of which is at present not less than Rs.75 a month.

246. Regulation 39 deals with officiating appointments and draws a distinction between an "outsider" and an officer who holds a lien on a permanent appointment.

247. It seems to us that the occasions for officiating appointments can be divided into two classes:—

(*i*) when the substantive incumbent vacates a post to proceed on leave or deputation but is expected to return thereto; and

(*ii*) when the substantive incumbent vacates a post permanently and a successor has to be found to hold the post substantively.

N.B.—The creation of a new permanent post may also occasion an officiating vacancy of the second type if a *locum tenens* is appointed to hold charge until the first substantive incumbent has been selected and assumes charge.

248. Ordinarily it should be possible to foresee when a vacancy of the second class will arise, and in such cases the Public Service Commission should be asked well *in advance* to suggest the name of a suitable person to fill the vacancy substantively. When for any reason such prior consultation is not possible, the Public Service Commission should be consulted as soon as possible after the

occurrence of the vacancy and should be informed simultaneously what officiating arrangement if any has been made or is proposed.

249. In the case of vacancies of the first class, we feel that less stringent rules may appropriately be applied and we consider that if the term of the leave or deputation is not expected to exceed nine months, the Public Service Commission need not be consulted whether the *locum tenens* is an "outsider" or a person already in Government service.

250. Regulation 40 deals with the appointment of an "outsider" to a temporary post. We consider that, subject to the provisions of Regulation 31, amended as we have suggested above, the Commission should be consulted whenever it is proposed to appoint an "outsider" to a temporary post, the term of which is likely to exceed six months.

251. Regulation 41 excludes from the purview of the Commission any appointment to a temporary post when such a post is filled by a person already holding a lien on a permanent post. We recommend that this Regulation be amended so as to provide for consultation with the Commission when such appointment is in effect a promotion such as we recommend below should be brought within the purview of the Commission, and when the term of the post is likely to last more than six months.

The Commission's Function in respect of Promotions

252. So long as the application of the cardinal principles of "equal opportunity for all" and "a fair field to merit without favour" is assured in the initial selection of officers for the public services, it should in our opinion not be necessary to trouble the Commission in the matter of promotion, except in respect of promotions—

(*i*) from a subordinate service to a provincial service, and

(*ii*) from one provincial service to another.

253. This formula calls for the addition of one rider. Compliance with the Classification, Control and Appeal Rules has necessitated the lumping together in one provincial service—the Bengal General Service—of some hundred and eighty odd posts, most of which are entirely unconnected. On the other hand, this service includes two or three, sometimes half a dozen posts that might be regarded as an embryo separate service and to the highest of which appointment would ordinarily be made by promotion from the lower. We have considered how far such promotion should be brought within the purview of the Commission and in our opinion the Commission need be troubled only when the appointment is to a post of a Head of a Department, e.g., if it is proposed to fill the post of Director of Industries, the Registrar of Co-operative Societies or Inspector-General of Registration by the promotion of the Deputy Director of Industries, an Assistant Registrar of Co-operative

Societies or an Inspector of Registration Offices respectively. It will, therefore, be necessary to add a third item, viz.,—

(*iii*) a promotion within the Bengal General Service when such promotion is to a post of a Head of a Department.

254. In the course of its evidence, the Commission stressed the need for an improvement in the standard of officers' confidential character rolls. We have examined a number of these rolls and agree that if the Commission is to discharge its responsibility in the matter of promotion, they must be given better material than that available in the majority of such reports as we have seen. We are aware of the risks attending the use of a standard form of report but such a form has the great advantage of directing the attention of reporting officers to the points upon which their opinion should be on record and we suggest that the new Establishment Division we propose should be set up as part of the Chief Minister's Office should be asked to devise a suitable form. There is at present a tendency on the part of reporting officers to limit their remarks to the manner in which an officer is discharging the duties of his present post. // We cannot emphasise too strongly that, except in the lower grades of the service, where seniority should be given some weight, (*i*) the promotee should be promoted not because of what he has done in the past but of what it is hoped he will do in the future and (*ii*) in choosing a man for promotion one must look simply and solely at the good that the organisation will get out of the fact that this man rather than that is moved up in the team. To ensure therefore, that the Commission shall be in a position to apply the correct criteria it is essential that the material on record should include estimates of the officer's power to take responsibility, power to control subordinates and general capacity to discharge the duties of higher posts for which he is potentially a candidate. //

Acceptance of Advice

255. We note with approval that the Cabinet have adopted the convention that the advice of the Commission will ordinarily be accepted and that whenever Government feel unable to accept that advice there will be further consultation before a final decision is reached. In our opinion however the adoption of such a convention does not go far enough. To protect Ministers against political pressure and against the suspicion that an appointment, promotion, transfer or posting has been made on political grounds or for reasons other than merit we regard it as of paramount importance that, apart of course from the choice of a Private Secretary where such an appointment exists, Ministers should have no hand whatever in the appointment, promotion, transfer or posting of any officer of lower status than a Secretary or Deputy Secretary to Government or a Head or Deputy Head of a Department.

256. We have been told that the Public Service Commission is commonly asked to suggest the names of double the number of candidates for whom vacancies exist. We endorse the Commission's

view that the order of merit is an integral part of the Commission's recommendation and in so far as the practice of asking for the names of more candidates than there are vacancies is designed to preserve some freedom of choice to the appointing authority this practice appears to us to be inconsistent with the convention referred to above and we recommend that the Commission should ordinarily not be asked to suggest the names of more candidates than there are vacancies.

Disciplinary Matters

257. Subject to Regulations made by the Governor the Commission has to be consulted on all disciplinary matters. The Commission has complained that for the most part departmental proceedings are conducted very incompetently. The conduct of proceedings has an important bearing on the morale of the services and it is essential that proceedings should be drawn up properly and disposed of promptly. We appreciate that this will often call for a familiarity with principles of evidence and judicial procedure that all heads of offices may not have and we recommend that the Establishment Division should be charged with the duty of advising on the conduct of proceedings and indeed of itself conducting cases of importance.

Reports of the Commission

258. In the course of their evidence the Commission stated that—

(1) they had not always been satisfied that the reasons for the non-acceptance of their advice were the public interests; and

(2) Government were all too prone to ignore their own rules regarding consultation with the Commission.

259. We are told that in accordance with a decision taken in November, 1939, the Commission submits annually to His Excellency the Governor—

(*a*) a full and frank report in the form of a note for the information of His Excellency the Governor and the Ministers; and

(*b*) an abridged (and bowdlerised) draft report for publication.

The first is not for publication and is not printed. It is laid down that the second report (which is published after consideration in Cabinet) should be primarily a record of the work of the Commission and the manner of its presentation should avoid criticism of Government beyond a statement that in such and such cases the advice of the Commission was not accepted.

260. In our opinion this practice is unsatisfactory and stifles legitimate criticism. We consider it right that Government should if necessary be prepared to justify in public any decision taken on

a matter upon which the Commission has to be consulted and we recommend the preparation and publication of a single report in which the relevant facts regarding any case the Commission deem suitable for public comment should be set out in temperate language and as far as possible in agreed terms as is the practice in the preparation of Audit Reports. This to our mind is the only way to ensure that the advice of the Commission is not overruled except after due consideration and with a full sense of responsibility and that where consultation with the Commission is prescribed such consultation will in fact be made unless there are good and sufficient reasons for relaxing the rules. It is interesting to note, in this connexion, the procedure followed in one of the Dominions with whose practice we have had the opportunity of acquainting ourselves. The procedure is as follows:—

> If the Governor-General does not approve of any recommendation made in any matter required to be dealt with by the Governor-General under the Public Service Act only after receiving the recommendation of the Public Service Board, he may require the Board to furnish a fresh recommendation. If the Governor-General does not approve the fresh recommendation, the law requires that a statement of the reasons for not approving the recommendation shall be laid before both Houses of Parliament within thirty days of the receipt of the recommendation if Parliament is then sitting, and if not then sitting, within fourteen days of the next meeting of Parliament.

In the Memorandum furnished to us about the practice in the Dominion referred to, it is stated that "Recommendations of the Public Service Board pursuant to the statutory provisions of the Act are given effect to unless varied by the Governor-General in Council. It might be mentioned that the Board's recommendations are invariably accepted".

CHAPTER VIII

Speeding the Machine

A.—GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

261. It is a widely held belief that Government Departments, not only in Bengal but in most countries, are intolerably slow in the despatch of business, that their departmental and inter-departmental transactions proceed in an atmosphere of leisured calm, and that, particularly in comparison with commercial houses, their methods of dealing with correspondence from the public are dilatory in the extreme.

Difference between Government Departments and Commercial Concerns

262. It is all too easy to draw facile comparisons between the processes and procedures of business firms and Government Departments and to overlook the different conditions under which they work. Commercial concerns determine their own policy; Government Departments have to follow policies laid down for them. Business houses are at liberty to follow methods of work fixed by themselves: in Government Departments the work is often conditioned by the terms of Statutes, the provisions of which all too frequently pay all too little regard to their practical application. Government Departments are bound to accord equality of treatment to members of the public: trading concerns have a much freer hand. Finally, Government Departments conduct their affairs in the knowledge that their actions are open to challenge by the Auditor-General, the Legislature and the Press. They tend therefore to lay greater emphasis on the right answer rather than on the prompt answer. Business firms are, in general, not exposed to such handicaps.

263. But, even after making the most generous allowance for these factors, it cannot, we think, be denied that there is ample scope for speeding up the working of the Governmental machine.

Causes of Delays

264. The causes of delays in the despatch of business are various —defects in the structure of the machine, faulty organisation, inappropriate techniques and procedures, unsatisfactory working conditions and insufficient and imperfectly trained staff. In the preceding Chapters of this Report we have made proposals in the fields of structure, organisation and staffing which will automatically reduce the delays inherent in the present set-up. Thus, the Development Board will eliminate the waste of time now involved in the complete working out of a scheme in one Ministry and having to modify it at that stage to fit in with the views and schemes of other Ministries. By establishing the relationships and the allocation of duties between Ministries and Departments, we have cut out much

inter-departmental noting. By proposing the abolition of Commissioners, we have removed one link in the chain of decision and report. The concept of the Provincial and the District Development Plan and the setting up of the Development Board will enable much work now concentrated at Headquarters to be decentralised to the Districts, and will provide a means of watching that the execution of the Plan is kept up to programme.

Scope of Present Chapter

265. This Chapter, then, should be regarded as complementary to those which precede it. It is directed mainly to questions of procedure and working conditions, and will cover three problems arising in the Districts. Since it is generally assumed that the system of financial control in the Province is the most potent single factor in the delays which take place in the despatch of Government business, we shall take that first. We do not by any means subscribe to the view that the system of financial control, which, incidentally. differs little from that in force elsewhere in India, is the most important cause of delay, but there is unquestionably considerable scope for delegation.

B.—FINANCIAL CONTROL

266. Summing up their views on the problem of financial control the Haldane Machinery of Government Committee (1918) noted as follows:—

> "On the whole, experience seems to show that the interests of the tax-payer cannot be left to the spending Departments; that those interests require the careful consideration of each item of public expenditure in its relation to other items and to the available resources of the State, as well as the vigilant supervision of some authority not directly concerned in the expenditure itself; and that such supervision can be most naturally and effectively exercised by the Department which is responsible for raising the revenue required.
>
> But it is obvious that the success of a system of control which is, in theory at least, so comprehensive, so rigid and so minute, must depend on the manner in which it is applied."

267. The trouble in Bengal today is that the application of a system of control, essentially similar in theory to that of the Treasury in the United Kingdom as set out in the above extract, has not adjusted itself sufficiently to the expansion of the Provincial Government's activities that has taken place in recent years. We have been told that in the calendar year 1944 there were no fewer than 26,000 unofficial references to the Finance Department. The attempt to retain so large a volume of work within a single centralised control, manned by only half a dozen officers, must inevitably impose a hindrance on the despatch of business that outweighs the

advantages which once accrued from such centralised control, and it is now essential to reduce the number of references to be made to the Finance Department.

Delegation of Financial Authority

268. There is already a small number of instances in which complete delegation has been made to an authority subordinate to Government and the whole appropriation included under a particular head of account in the demand presented to the Legislature is placed at the disposal of a Head of an "attached office" to disburse at his discretion in accordance with principles laid down by Government. For example, each year the appropriation under each of the following heads of account:—

37—Education
- C. Grants to non-Government Arts Colleges
- F. Direct grants to non-Government Secondary Schools
- I. Grants to Local Bodies for Primary Education
- N. Scholarships

39—Public Health
- B. Grants for Public Health Purposes. Grants-in-aid for the improvement of rural water supply
- C. Expenses in connection with epidemic diseases
  - (1) Free distribution of quinine.
  - (4) Purchase of mepacrine tablets, etc., for free distribution

is placed at the disposal of the Director of Public Instruction, the Chief Engineer, Public Health Department or the Director of Public Health, as the case may be, who is free to disburse these allotments without further reference to Government. We have been told that even in such cases considerable delays sometimes occur between the authentication of the Budget and the receipt of the authority to spend the money so voted. We advise that an enquiry should be made to see whether changes in procedure are necessary to ensure that appropriations are made available to Departments as soon as possible after authentication. For the most part however, still following a tradition built up in the days of extreme financial stringency between 1920 and 1936, Government, and in particular the Finance Department, are attempting to exercise a detailed control that, even if it were desirable, has, with the enormous expansion of Government's activities, already become quite impracticable.

Yardsticks for Personnel and Matériel Expenditure

269. It is no doubt essential to maintain uniformity throughout the services in respect of pay, allowances and conditions of service, and for that reason we recognise that when a Ministry wishes to suggest a departure from general orders governing pay, allowances or conditions of service, it will still be necessary to refer individual cases to the Establishment Division.

Ministerial Responsibility

270. Outside the field of pays, allowances and conditions of service however, we feel there are other large fields in which it should be possible, without loss of real financial control, to lay upon the Ministry concerned the final responsibility for seeing both that an individual project is in accordance with the accepted policy of Government in respect of the particular subject in question and that Government receive good value for the outlay involved.

271. In the United Kingdom the scrutiny by the Treasury of proposals involving new expenditure is directed in the main to a critical appreciation of the objectives which the proposed expenditure aims at achieving and thereafter to a consideration of the cost of the scheme from the standpoint of the total burden that it would be financially and economically prudent to impose upon the country. The broad financial implications of each proposal will have been worked out by the initiating Department, and it is not the function of the Treasury to re-examine the Department's estimate of the cost of implementing its proposal or generally to consider whether the same results could not be achieved more economically in some other way. The responsibility for ensuring that Government receive good value for their outlay rests on the Minister of the Department in question. It is true that in the United Kingdom each spending Department has its own finance branch. In Bengal at present there is probably no permanent Ministry in which it would be economical to retain a whole-time officer with special training and of sufficient standing to serve this purpose, but we feel that where, as is so often the case, the annual appropriation under a particular head of a Ministry's budget is intended to meet the cost of a number of individual projects each designed to implement an agreed policy, it should certainly not be necessary to obtain the concurrence of Finance to each such individual project. It should surely be possible to settle once and for all the principles and limits within the ambit of which that Ministry may go ahead without further reference to Finance.

Authority for Reappropriations

272. There is another class of case in which we consider reference to Finance can well be dispensed with. Ministries have already been authorised to sanction, without previous reference to Finance, reappropriations between heads subordinate to a minor

head, but, under existing orders, all proposals to reappropriate from one minor head to another have to be referred to Finance. When, as in most cases, the entire grant is under the control of a single Ministry, we can see no reason why Finance should saddle itself with the task of examining all proposals of reappropriation between minor heads and we recommend that, subject to the following conditions, Ministries should be given power to sanction any reappropriation within a grant without reference to Finance—

(*i*) that there is no risk of the grant as a whole being exceeded;

(*ii*) that the expenditure to meet which the reappropriation is to be made is not such as to involve the undertaking of a new unapproved recurring liability;

Explanation.—Savings that become available as a result of the postponement, whether deliberate or unavoidable, of expenditure for which specific provision exists in the budget may be reappropriated to accelerate the implementation of any approved scheme already in progress because even should such acceleration involve an immediate temporary increase in Government's recurring liabilities, Government will not be assuming a new unapproved (ultimate) recurring liability.

(*iii*) that the savings come to light in sufficient time to permit of their being spent to good purpose and the expenditure is not incurred merely to prevent savings lapsing.

273. Subject to similar conditions, power should, whenever possible, be given to Heads of Departments to reappropriate within the appropriations placed at their disposal.

Financial Delegation a matter for detailed examination

274. There are other directions in which the number of references to the Finance Ministry can be reduced. The whole question of financial delegation will have to be examined in detail by the Finance Ministry and the Organisation and Methods Division of the Chief Minister's Department, and here we shall content ourselves by indicating some of the directions in which we are satisfied considerable further delegation is possible.

Delegation to District Officers

275. For certain classes of work, e.g., Certificate Department, Land Registration Department, etc., District Officers are already authorised to engage temporary establishment on the basis of prescribed yardsticks and subject to budget provision. Yardsticks to measure the staff required to cope with other classes of work should be prescribed wherever the prescription of a yardstick is practicable, and the District Officer should be given authority to sanction the appointment of extra temporary establishment on the basis of such yardsticks. It is of course the duty of every disbursing

officer to apply for an additional allotment as soon as he sees that his allotment is likely to prove insufficient, but when the circumstances admittedly (i.e., on the basis of prescribed yardsticks) require the employment of additional staff, the appointment of such staff should not, in our opinion, wait upon the formalities of obtaining additional budget provision.

Permissible Variations from Standards

276. The Rules governing contingent expenditure commonly prescribe—

(*a*) maximum prices at which heads of offices may purchase;

(*b*) rates of supply in accordance with which heads of offices are authorised to supply certain articles to their subordinates;

and at present any deviation from the prescribed ceilings or rates require the sanction of Government.

277. To avoid references on such minor matters we recommend that heads of offices be given some discretion, and we suggest that, when the lowest tender received by the head of an office is above the prescribed ceiling, he should be competent to sanction an excess not exceeding, say, 25 per cent.

278. Again, we suggest that if the head of an office is satisfied that an earlier issue than that prescribed by the Rules is unavoidable, he should certify that—

(*a*) such issue is unavoidable, and

(*b*) the circumstances necessitating the earlier issue are not such as to imply negligence on the part of any Government servant,

and on the strength of such a certificate he should be competent to make the necessary issue without seeking higher sanction.

C.—OFFICE MANAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATIONS

Duplicate Noting

279. A fruitful source of delay as well as of annoyance and friction is the present method of handling cases requiring consultation between a Department and its Ministry. Let us follow the course of a proposal put up to a Department by its senior representative in a Division or District. On receipt in the Department a file is opened and the Department's assistants put up any relevant papers, call attention to precedents and add comments. The Head of the Department having considered the file, endorses the proposal with any modifications that seem to him necessary and submits it to the Ministry in the form of a *letter*. On receipt of the letter in the Ministry a file is opened to which the Ministry's assistants attach any relevant Ministry files, call attention to precedents (these are, or should be, the same precedents as those to

which the Departmental assistants had already drawn the attention of the Head of the Department) and add observations on the scheme put forward. These observations are (in the absence of the Departmental file) naturally made in ignorance of at least some of the considerations and arguments leading up to the submission of the proposal to the Ministry. The file then returns to the Department for comments on the observations made by the Ministry. The comments are duly made and the file goes back again to the Ministry. The process may be repeated several times, with the result that many months pass before a decision is reached. In the meantime, the Head of the Department may have been driven to fury by what, on occasions, appears to be uninstructed commentary by the Ministry's assistants.

280. We are far from suggesting that Ministries do not have, in the policy and administrative field, a useful contribution to make to the perfecting of schemes put forward by Departments, but the present procedure is patently susceptible of simplification and acceleration. Our recommendations are as follows:—

(*i*) The practice of communicating proposals by letter should cease.

(*ii*) All subjects requiring both Departmental and Ministerial consideration shall be dealt with in special files, e.g., of a distinguishing colour.

(*iii*) Proposals originating in Departments should be prepared in the Department in such form as to show all relevant facts, precedents, and reasons for and against. Where any proposal is based upon detailed statistics collected from a number of sources, a summary of these statistics should be placed in the file and a separate Departmental file should be maintained embodying the detailed statistics.

(*iv*) The Head of the Department should send the special file with his proposal to the Ministry. In important cases he will himself take the file to the Secretary, discuss with him and supply any further information which might be required by the Secretary. The Secretary will of course be at liberty to send the file to any one in his office who may have specialised knowledge for opinion or indication as to whether any relevant facts have been omitted. In general, however, the file should be in such a condition as to enable the Secretary to deal with it without further noting from his own office. Where the file is sent to the Ministry, it must be dealt with by the Assistant Secretary or the Secretary himself in the first place. The Secretary or Assistant Secretary would then indicate the course of action to be taken.

(*v*) Files which originate in the Ministry will in general be such as to call for detailed noting in the Department rather

than in the Ministry and such files would go direct to the Head of the Department from the Ministry and subsequently be dealt with as previously indicated for files originating in the Department. If it is necessary for noting to be done by the Ministry in the first place, this noting would be in the file and would be available for the Head of the Department when the file went to him.

The Organisation and Methods Division of the Chief Minister's office should after reasonable experience investigate the working of this system and should, in particular, examine whether the best solution would not be to have a common office serving both the Ministry and the Department.

The Reference Section

281. The Reference Section can make or mar an office. Badly run, it is not only productive of heavy and avoidable delays, but deprives the dealing assistants of indispensable material. Where Reference Sections are bad, and many are, the inefficiency can almost invariably be traced to the fact that Reference Section work is regarded as routine and can therefore be safely entrusted to young and inexperienced clerks (often indeed probationers) or to assistants who have failed to "make the grade". To put a young and inexperienced clerk in the Reference Section produces delay and confusion in the office in two ways. Much time is spent in the search for files which may have a bearing on the case under consideration, and many files are attached which have no, or only a remote, relation to the file to which they are annexed. Service in the Reference Section is unpopular with the clerks themselves who appear to regard the work done in it as of inferior quality, which gives them little opportunity of distinguishing themselves in the eyes of their superiors, to whom they look for promotion. This we look upon as a wholly mistaken attitude. It should be made clear to everyone concerned that the Reference Section is a key post, upon the successful working of which the efficiency of the Office will largely depend and good service in which, so far from being a handicap to promotion, should be a positive recommendation. The Reference Section, in brief, should be elevated into a stepping stone to promotion, and not allowed to remain the pathway to oblivion.

Guidance by Officers to the Office

282. When a fresh receipt arrives in a Ministry or Department, a common practice at present is for it to be effectively considered at the lowest level first and then for it to proceed upwards until it reaches the officer capable and authorised finally to dispose of it. Much time and effort is involved in this process. The normal rule in respect of a fresh receipt requiring action should be for it to

reach a responsible officer (Assistant Secretary, Deputy Secretary or Secretary, as the case merits) without delay and where the responsible officer cannot give instructions straightaway as to the drafting of the reply, he should indicate what lines of enquiry he wishes pursued, what particular points he wishes investigated, what facts would be collected, etc. In this way, much time will be saved in not looking up unnecessary precedents, collecting irrelevant facts, and in abstention from ineffective noting.

Sense of Urgency Needed

283. But techniques and procedures designed to speed up the despatch of business will fail to produce their full results unless the staff is imbued with a proper sense of urgency. Government Departments should set themselves a high standard in the prompt handling of public business. The initiative, the precept and the example in this matter should come from the top. It cannot fail to discourage and dispirit keen junior officers who have striven for the prompt submission of cases to find that the files which they have sent up have come to rest for days, weeks and even months, on the table of a Minister or a Secretary. The public service in Bengal might well adopt as its motto Bacon's maxim "Measure not despatch by the times of the sitting but by the advancement of business". We received many complaints from District Magistrates about the present interminable delays in receiving replies from Writers' Buildings. The replies, when eventually received, often showed signs of not having been seen by a senior officer in the Secretariat. We think that it should be established as a rule that when *themselves* writing to the Secretariat on matters which they consider to be urgent or important, District Magistrates can ask that their letter should receive the personal attention of the Secretary. Similarly and conversely, the District Officer should give the same attention to a letter so marked by the Secretary himself.

Office Accommodation and Equipment

284. We have been greatly disappointed in most of the Government offices which we have visited. Even Writers' Buildings, apart from the rooms facing Dalhousie Square, is a warren of dark passages, exposed staircases and gloomy, crowded caverns. We are aware that the War has prevented the usual repairs; we realise that much extra staff has been engaged; but, even in normal times, we believe that Writers' Buildings was no longer fitted to serve as the headquarters of the Provincial Administration. Anderson House is a fine building, but its accommodation is limited, and it is four miles from the Secretariat. The Department of Civil Supplies has been housed in accommodation which Mr. Ethell describes as a slum, into which one had to fight one's way; and in which the organisation imposed by the nature of the building was such that severe interference with clerical processes, wastage of labour,

fatigue, bribery and corruption could easily, almost inevitably, occur.

285. In the districts, there is the same story; Mymensingh, Dacca and 24-Parganas are poorly designed, the last district in particular having offices which we consider a disgrace. Malda's 96 clerks are scattered into 53 separate rooms, and though Midnapore has dignity and spaciousness, the buildings are so far from each other that inter-communication during the hot weather and the monsoon must be an unpopular duty. At our request, the Chief Engineer (Communications and Works) was good enough to prepare a statement of the dates of construction of the district offices, some of which go back to the eighteenth century, while others may be even older, for there is no record of their construction (Howrah, Murshidabad, Nadia and the 24-Parganas). Admittedly, there have been "additions and alterations" since, but too many of these alterations have consisted in blocking up verandahs, and in the erection of partitions within the buildings themselves.

286. The subdivisions are just as bad, ranging from ill-lit and congested *pucca* buildings to thatched and timbered sheds. The Court rooms are cramped and badly lighted, undignified and dirty; the arrangements for witnesses are inadequate, so that they crowd the verandahs to the detriment of work; while some Court *hajats*. notoriously that at Alipore, are extremely insanitary. Additions to buildings appear to have been made without consideration for future development, appearance or administrative convenience, and a century's patchwork has produced a conglomeration of structures which are a discredit to Government, and a serious hindrance to the proper discharge of Government's business. In Dacca, Alipore and Bakarganj, to mention only three districts, extra office accommodation has had to be found in private houses, with an inevitable weakening of supervision and control.

287. The interior of many office buildings is, if anything, worse than the exterior. In some rooms, even on the brightest day, work has to be done in artificial light, ventilation is poor, and congestion is general. The furniture, as the Chapman Report indicated, is inadequate, unsuitable and decaying. Almirahs vary from the dwarf to the giant, and desks from imposing but antique secretariat tables to packing cases standing on bricks. Files are kept on open side-racks (where they harbour dust and disease), or on the clerks' tables, because there is still a belief that a desk heaped high with papers indicates extreme industry. In such squalid surroundings, in "conditions which no business house would tolerate", the day-to-day government of the country is carried on. It is not surprising that files are occasionally untraced, that letters "do not appear to have been received", and that sickness and inefficiency are common.

288. This state of affairs is not new; it is no temporary disorganisation, brought about by the impact of war. It was in

1937-38 that Mr. Chapman visited 22 of Bengal's districts, and it was in the early months of 1938 that he wrote that most of the offices were "inadequate for the increased establishments", and that in certain places the clerks "were required to work in definitely unhealthy conditions......in dark, insanitary buildings where much of their time is spent in a fight for elbow room.......As regards furniture I can only describe the conditions of most offices as poverty-stricken in the extreme......in a deplorable state of rickety decrepitude. A large number of rooms I saw looked more like old junk shops than Government offices". Since the publication of Mr. Chapman's Report, conditions have deteriorated. There was no attempt, there was perhaps no time, to implement his recommendations regarding furniture; new constructions were banned; and though nine District Officers have told us that their accommodation was adequate in 1939, only one has adequate accommodation today.

289. We believe that one of the factors which contributes to the decline of administrative efficiency is the absence of suitable accommodation and equipment. It is no argument to say that what was good enough for one generation must suffice for the next, or that buildings erected in 1771 must adequately fulfil modern needs. In the past, Government seems to have hesitated to spend money upon buildings and to have felt that the provision of up-to-date equipment was a luxury, the cost of which could not rightly be laid upon the taxpayer. There could have been no greater error, for money spent on providing satisfactory conditions of work produces handsome dividends, always in terms of increased efficiency, and often in reductions of staff.

290. We therefore recommend that Government should examine the whole question of its buildings, and that it should embark—as soon as materials become available—upon a Province-wide programme of reconstruction and re-equipping. We have been impressed by the magnitude of the post-war plans, and we believe that unless the rebuilding and refitting of Government's own offices finds a prominent part therein, "the administrative machine will be inadequate for the efficient discharge of the tasks ahead". It will be for experts in the field of office administration to advise upon lay-out and equipment; all that we would urge is that the office rooms be spacious, and that the officer in charge of the department should be so accommodated that he can supervise his subordinates, and at the same time retain a degree of privacy, appropriate both to his position and to the efficient discharge of his work. For the Head of the Office, whether District Officer or other official, we recommend accommodation commensurate with his position, since it is our intention that, when he is at headquarters, the Head of the Office should attend his office daily. Only by such regular attendance can the Head of the Office effectively control the work of his subordinates, and enforce that standard of discipline which

we consider necessary. If we are to judge by what we have heard and by what we have seen, it would appear that far too little attention has been paid to "working conditions", and that the efficiency of the administrative machine has suffered very seriously in consequence.

291. In addition to a good building and to appropriate furniture, there is the need for adequate equipment, and it appears to us that the supplying of some of this equipment need not await the provision of new offices. In particular would we instance the general complaint raised by District Officers that they have not enough typewriters. The utility of typewriters is enormous, and their absence is calculated to hold up business very seriously. In one district, routine letters took six weeks to issue from the date of drafting, owing to the shortage of machines. We therefore recommend that Government's policy regarding typewriters be the subject of close enquiry by the Organisation and Methods Division, and that machines be allotted on a far more generous scale than previously.

292. We are unanimous in our recommendation that telephone should be installed as fast, and in as many places, as possible. Only ten district headquarters are connected with Calcutta by telephone; there are very few connections between the districts and their subdivisions; and, with two exceptions, District Officers are agreed that a great deal of time would be saved, and a far tighter control would be maintained, if all essential offices and all subdivisions were in telephonic communication with the head of the district. We consider that the objective should be a telephone to every thana, and we recommend that plans be made with this in mind. At present, it may take five or six days for a letter to reach the Gopalganj and Madaripur subdivisions from the district headquarters at Faridpur; so that a fortnight might elapse before the answer to a query is received.

293. At Headquarters, there should be more extensions and more inter-departmental connections. We appreciate that the telephone is not an unmixed blessing, and we realise—as did Mr. Chapman—that it may be abused. Nevertheless, in the interests of administrative efficiency, we advocate a general increase in the number of official telephones, with the ultimate—if distant—objective of a "Telephone to every Thana".

Improvement in Touring Facilities

294. We consider it essential that touring should be encouraged, and we have received many complaints regarding the absence of touring facilities, and the inadequacy of travelling and halting allowances. It has been suggested that each district should have its station wagon and its pool of "jeeps"; that there should be motor launches, and that dak bungalows should be made more habitable, either by provincialisation or by subsidising the District

Boards. Extra allowances for night halts, and increased mileage for officers who have to hire taxis, are further suggestions. We strongly support the proposal that each district headquarters should have a station wagon, for local cartage and for general official duties in the town. We are not convinced that it would be an economical proposition to provide transport for all touring officers; the problem of satisfactory maintenance is a big one, and the chances of abuse are considerable. Nevertheless, we would recommend that the case of each district and subdivisional headquarters be examined, and that upon the results of such examination, Government should decide what official transportation can properly be provided. Should such provision be made, it should be on the "pool" system, as with launches, and the responsibility for maintenance should rest clearly with one controlling officer. In the meanwhile, and wherever official transport is not provided, Government should ensure that travelling and halting allowances adequately compensate the touring officer, whether he travels in his own or in a hired vehicle. The improvement of dak bungalows would appear to be long overdue.

Summary of Recommendations on Office Accommodation and Touring Facilities

295. (1) Government to prepare a scheme for the rebuilding and re-equipping of all its offices where such action is necessary, and to implement such scheme as rapidly as possible, starting as soon as materials become available. In the lay out of buildings, the advice of experts in office management should be taken, and it should be borne in mind that the Head of the Department should be accommodated so that he can be private, yet see his staff.

(2) Fitting accommodation should be made for the Head of the Office, who is to attend office daily when at headquarters.

(3) More generous allotments of typewriters.

(4) Increase in the telephone system, with the ultimate objective of a "telephone to every thana", and with inter-departmental connections where the office is sufficiently large to justify them.

(5) Examination of the touring facilities at each district and subdivisional headquarters, and consideration by Government whether any form of official transport should be provided.

(6) Provision of motor launches, where it can be shown that the considerable expense involved is likely to be justified by improved administration.

(7) Provision of a station wagon at District Headquarters.

(8) Examination of all travelling and halting allowances, to ensure that they are adequate.

(9) Restoration of dak bungalows.

(10) Direction that Heads of Offices, when at headquarters, should attend their office daily.

Hours of Work and Length of Holidays

296. There are two other aspects in which existing practice is open to criticism and inevitably slows the tempo of the machine: the first is the office hours, the second the number of holidays observed by Government offices.

297. We have been told that the average business hours of commercial houses in Calcutta are 9-30 a.m. to 5 p.m.: some of these houses open as early as 9 a.m., but none later than 10 a.m. The present Secretariat office hours are 10-30 a.m. to 5 p.m. We can see no justification for a later start in Calcutta than 10 a.m. and we recommend that office hours in Government offices in Calcutta should be from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

298. In some quarters the number of public holidays prescribed under the Negotiable Instrument Act in Bengal is regarded as excessive and the very large number of holidays other than those Act holidays observed by Government offices is the subject of most adverse criticism. We can appreciate that no useful purpose will be served by requiring courts to sit on days on which the public will not attend or on which to enforce attendance would ordinarily be regarded as a hardship, but we find it inexcusable, particularly in time of war, that Government offices having daily transactions with the public and treasuries at which the public may be required to make payments should be closed when work in business houses generally proceeds and that for as long sometimes as a fortnight at a stretch.

299. We can find no justification for the closing of Government offices on days on which work in commercial offices is generally in full swing and we recommend that Government offices should be closed only on Act holidays.

D.—THREE EXAMPLES OF PROCEDURES INVOLVING SERIOUS DELAYS

Landlord's Fees

300. Another example of waste of time and man-power is the landlord fee department of the collectorate.

301. The statement below will give some indication of the work involved in complying with the provisions of sections 12 to 15, 18 and 26C of the Bengal Tenancy Act, 1885—

Year.	Number of cases brought forward from previous year.	Number of cases instituted during the year.	Total.	Number of cases disposed of during the year.	Number of cases pending at the close of the year.
43-44 ..	7,59,154	15,01,953	22,61,107	8,73,238	13,87,869

302. Prior to the passing of the Bengal Tenancy (Amendment) Act, 1938 the amounts received annually under sections 12 to 15, 18 and 26/26C were of the order of 40 lakhs and there may have been some justification for saddling the Collector with the task of transmitting these fees. Since the 1938 amendment abolishing the fee previously payable in respect of the transfer of an occupancy holding the amount received annually under sections 12 to 15 and 18 is rarely more than 3 lakhs and the great bulk of this is forfeited to Government under section 18C.

303. The labour and expense involved in the Collectorate in the existing procedure for the transmission of these fees are out of all proportion to the value of the fees in question and we consider that these fees might well be abolished. We appreciate of course that even if the fee payable under sections 12 to 15 and 18 is abolished there still remains the problem of making provision for the service of notice.

304. We are inclined to think that in the case of transfers both of occupancy holdings and of permanent tenures the interest of the transferee to get his name mutated in the landlord's *sherista* is so great that it should not be necessary to make special provision in the Act on that account. If however it is considered essential to see that arrangements are made for the giving of notice before an instrument purporting to transfer an occupancy holding or permanent tenure is accepted for registration there is in our opinion no justification for saddling the Collector with any responsibility in this behalf and our recommendation is that all notices should be served by registered post.

Collection of Government Dues

305. Each department concerned with the levy of Government dues is responsible for their collection so far as they are paid voluntarily. When they are not so paid, the Bengal Land Revenue Sales Act (Act XI of 1859) commonly known as the "Sunset Law" and the Bengal Public Demands Recovery Act (Act III of 1913), commonly known as the Certificate Act, provide the main machinery for realising the amounts due.

306. The former of these two Acts, applies only to arrears of land revenue due from permanently settled estates and cannot be invoked to recover education cess or any other dues from the owners of such estates. To recover all dues other than land revenue, recourse must be had to the Certificate Act.

307. The Sunset Law is effective, and serves its purpose well, within its limited sphere; but cases under the Certificate Act, and especially those arising out of the garnishee procedure prescribed in Rules 18A to 18I, are most troublesome and complicated. We, therefore, recommend that the Sunset Law (Act XI of 1859), should be amended to cover the realisation of arrear cesses of all kinds. We appreciate that this proposal may add to the

embarrassment of zamindars unless simultaneous steps are taken to provide them with improved machinery for the realisation of the rents and cesses due to them. It was to provide such machinery that the Floud Commission recommended that the jurisdiction of rent suits should vest in special Revenue Officers. We ourselves are inclined to doubt the efficacy of this solution, but we are unable to offer any alternative suggestion.

308. Quite apart from the question of bringing arrear cesses under the Sale Law, the Certificate Act itself stands in need of amendment. Those of us who were not previously familiar with conditions in Bengal have been shocked at the time which commonly elapses before coercive processes are set in motion, and at the serious delays which so often characterise certificate cases. This is in part due to remediable defects in the Act itself, though in the time at our disposal, we have not been able fully to investigate this aspect of the problem. In our view, however, the amount of every claim should be settled in the department or by the officer responsible for assessing it before the machinery of certification is set in motion. It appears to us that the function of a Certificate Officer is to collect a sum settled, beyond the possibility of further argument, to be due. It should not be for the Certificate Officer to enter into any discussion or to hear evidence on the merits of a demand, and we consider that the Act should be so amended as to limit the ground upon which a certificate debtor can deny liability to the sole ground that he has paid the amount.

309. It follows from this that, before applying for a certificate, the Department concerned should have given the debtor due notice of the demand, and of its intention to apply for action under the Certificate procedure, if the demand is not paid, or if objection is not entered within a certain date. It follows, also, that when the application for the certificate is eventually made, the requisitioning officer should inform the Certificate Officer that such notice has been duly served and that any objections have been disposed of by the Department concerned.

310. We have noticed that there exists a practice of waiting until the demands have swollen to a substantial figure, or until several months have passed since the demand fell in arrears, before applying for a certificate. It appears to us that it must have a most demoralising effect to wait until the end of the fiscal year, or until small demands have accumulated into big ones, before taking action; and we recommend that proceedings should be initiated immediately the demand becomes an arrear, and no matter how small it may be.

311. Defects in the Law, and in practice and procedure, do not alone account for delays and for the failure to collect the public dues. The centralisation of the system is also partly responsible,

and we suggest that, once the position is established that the Certificate Officer is no more than a collecting agent, it should be possible to entrust the handling of certificate cases to officers other than those established at District and Subdivisional Headquarters. We have agreed in principle that devolution, both in the administration of justice and in the collection of Government revenues, is desirable; but we are also unanimous in the opinion that it would be a serious mistake to overload the Circle Officer, and thereby to commit the same error against which we have elsewhere protested.

312. Although, therefore, we think it possible that the Circle Officer *may* be able to undertake certificate work, we would strongly advise that he should not be saddled with such duties until the most detailed enquiries have been made by the Organisation and Methods Division, to ensure that the addition of such a duty would not prejudice the Circle Officer's proper performance of his union board and development functions. On the other hand, we consider that the Union Board clerk might reasonably have a special responsibility for ensuring the prompt service and return of the processes issued through his Union Board; and it would be part of the Circle Officer's duty, when visiting or inspecting a Union Board, to satisfy himself that processes were being properly handled. We understand that in the past, Presidents have not all shown either promptness or competence in dealing with notices, a criticism which has serious implications, in that important proceedings may thereby have been delayed. While on this subject, we would observe, most forcibly, that once it has been decided to have recourse to the Certificate Act, the utmost resolution should be shown, since the more promptly and firmly such powers are used, the less frequent will be the occasions for exercising them.

313. It appears that there is all too often a lack of resolution on the part of officers responsible for the collection of revenues and we have been told that at least in respect of rent and cesses, Government tend to be satisfied if the total collection for the year, that is the collection on account both of arrears and of the current demand, is not less than the current demand. We cannot but condemn such an attitude. We feel that far greater strictness in realising Government dues is necessary, not only because this attitude must jeopardise the revenues of the Province, but also because any slackness or undue squeamishness in this field must seriously damage the prestige of Government and impair ability to enforce their decisions in other fields.

Delays in the Criminal File

314. Most of the criminal files which we examined were heavily in arrear. In certain cases, the delays in bringing cases to trial and in disposing of the cases when brought to trial could only be described as outrageous. There are several reasons for this state of affairs. First, a shortage of Court Police staff and effective

police procedure: secondly, an insufficiency of trying magistrates, and, lastly, the system whereby trying Magistrates have to combine their judicial functions with other duties. The first of these reasons we have dealt with in Chapter VI. The second calls for an addition to the number of lawyer Magistrates and/or to the number of Munsiffs employed on criminal work. We have received authoritative evidence that both the Munsiffs and the lawyer Magistrates dispose of their cases promptly and efficiently. It is the third category which requires radical treatment. The fact that a large percentage of Magistrates have to combine case work with general administration means that few of them become really expert in handling trials. This, in itself, makes for delay since they are seldom a match for defending pleaders, who, when in their view it suits their clients, are able to prolong proceedings to an extent unheard of elsewhere. Apart from this, the fact that Magistrates have to attend to a variety of duties makes it possible for the less keen and efficient among them to offer excuses for their failure to proceed with cases *de die in diem*.

315. We think that there should be greater specialisation in judicial duties, with spells of concentration on case work alternating with spells of general administration. It might be possible to go further than this, and at an appropriate stage in an officer's career, to offer those who have shown an aptitude for case work the option of remaining on judicial duties for the remainder of their career, in much the same way as happens with members of the Indian Civil Service who choose a judicial career. It ought to be possible to take care of the prospects of such officers by appointing them to be Assistant Judges with the reservation of a number of appointments as Additional District Judges as a special prize. It is a matter which we suggest Government should examine further.

CHAPTER IX

Conditions of Service

A.—PAY

316. Apart from the fact that the present level of prices is the result of war conditions and is unlikely to persist in the post-war period, the time at our disposal ruled out any idea of our attempting to work out specific scales of pay for the numerous grades and classes of employee in the service of the Government of Bengal and all we can hope to do is to indicate the broad principles which should determine what those scales should be.

Principles of Pay

317. In our view pay should be determined in accordance with the following principles:—

(1) Subject always to the overriding condition that no pay should be less than a living wage, the pay and attendant conditions of service should be such as to attract the right type of recruit and thereafter to retain an efficient and contented staff.

(2) Substantially equal pay should be given for comparable work carried out in comparable conditions.

(3) Pay should be based on long term trends and should not be varied at frequent intervals to meet fluctuations in the cost of living. Wide fluctuations can be met by cuts or allowances but we regard it as undesirable and unsound to vary basic pays on short term considerations.

We consider that Government should be in the forefront of good employers and the remuneration of Government servants should not compare unfavourably with that offering in private employment for comparable services due allowance being made for privileges enjoyed by civil servants such as security of tenure and the receipt of pensions. On the other hand in Bengal comparison with the rates offered by private employers is not necessarily a safe guide in all fields and the fact that the rate paid by Government is not below that paid by private employers is in itself no guarantee that the pay is a living wage. Until a few years ago Government were by far the largest single employer of certain classes and in a market in which the supply was invariably in excess of the demand, commercial firms tended to follow the Government rate. For this reason although the rate compared favourably enough with that offered in private employment we are inclined to doubt very much whether for some years before the exceptional war-time rise in the cost of living the initial pay of the lower division clerk in district offices, viz., Rs.35, can fairly be said to have represented a living wage.

Provision of a Reasonable Career

318. Closely allied to the question of appropriate remuneration are the desirability of providing a reasonable career and the avoidance of "blind alley" employment. In the past the demoralising effect of blind alleys and the desirability of ensuring a reasonable career appear to have been overlooked or perhaps here as elsewhere considerations of economy prevailed to the detriment of the public service. We regard service as a typist in the Secretariat on the scale Rs.45—5/2—75—3/2—90 with its only outlet by appointment to a post of Secretariat stenographer as an example of a blind alley for which some additional outlet should be provided. In our opinion subject to such limitations as may be considered necessary to prevent this service becoming a back-door to the Secretariat clerical service a typist of outstanding merit who has the requisite educational qualifications should be eligible for promotion to the Secretariat Lower Division.

Reduction in the Number of Pay Scales

319. The Manual of Pays contains hundreds of differing pay scales; the average monthly cost of many of these scales differs by a rupee or two although a number of them, especially in the lowest fields, relate to work of a very similar nature. It is in our opinion quite impossible to assess to a few rupees the value of the work to be done in a particular post and the all-too-common practice of determining the pay of a post in accordance with the status of the office of which it forms a part is one that offends against the second of the principles stated above. We believe that the number of pay scales could with advantage be reduced very considerably. We recommend that the possibility of simplifying the pay scales now in force in Bengal in the lower fields should be examined by the Establishment Division of the Chief Minister's Office.

B.—PROMOTION

Promotion by Merit

320. As we have pointed out in an earlier Chapter, promotion should be regarded as made in the interests of the public service and not of the individual: and that, except in the subordinate grades, where seniority should be given due weight, promotion should be by merit.

Equalisation of Promotion Prospects

321. In the Secretariat promotions are made on a departmental basis, with the result that clerks in one Department may do much better than clerks in another. If the clerks of the Secretariat are treated as a single body for the purposes of promotion, the value of Departmental experience will be lost, and clerks on being transferred from Ministry to Ministry lack that detailed Departmental knowledge which, in the Secretariat, is so important.

Some inequality of opportunity is inevitable and must be looked upon as the rub of the green, but it can be reduced by intelligent establishment policy and practice, e.g.,—

(*i*) by planning ahead to reduce promotion blocks; namely, by keeping an eye on the position as a whole and by transferring promising men early in their service to Ministries where blocks are not likely to arise. Ministries and Departments should adopt a broad outlook in this matter and not oppose the transfer of good clerks because such transfer may lead to a temporary loss of efficiency;

(*ii*) when new types of work or new duties have to be undertaken by a Ministry by recruiting the staff for such new work from the Ministries where promotion is slow. There can be no objection to this course on the grounds that the clerks are inexperienced, since, the work being new, no one would have had any experience of it.

Exceptional Promotion

322. It is sound establishment policy to hold out as an inducement to greater endeavour the prospect of an occasional and exceptional outlet to a Service superior to the one entered on first recruitment. There is of course regular provision for this in certain Services already, e.g., promotion from the Bengal Junior Civil Service to the Bengal Civil Service, but we would extend the practice and provide for outstanding clerks in the District Offices being promoted to the Bengal Junior Civil Service. To achieve the object of this proposal, it is essential that the promotee should be young, say not over 35, and the exceptional promotion of the kind here contemplated should not be regarded as a reward for general good service towards the end of a clerk's career. The promotion should be made after consultation with the Public Service Commission from lists of names put up by District Magistrates. We would make similar provision for outstanding assistants in the Secretariat and Attached Offices, the promotion in this case being direct to the rank of Assistant Secretary, a title which we suggest should be abolished and replaced by that of Under Secretary. On appointment to be Under Secretary the promotee who should not be over 35, should become for all purposes a member of the Bengal Civil Service. We wish to emphasise again that, by these two proposals, we do not contemplate the dilution of the Bengal Civil Service or the Bengal Junior Civil Service by mediocrities. The promotions we have in mind would be occasional and exceptional and would be open only to outstanding men.

Superintendent in District Offices

323. This is perhaps a convenient place to include the recommendation which we wish to make that the Superintendent in District Offices should be given the status of a gazetted officer.

C.—PENSIONS

324. Under the existing pensionary system nothing is payable to the dependants of an officer who dies in service or to the heirs of a pensioner who dies within a month or two of his retirement.

Revision of Pension Rules

325. The system is one that may cause great hardship and we believe the services would welcome a revision of the Pension Rules on some such lines as that effected in the United Kingdom in 1909 where a system very similar to that now in force in Bengal was revised and the benefits were divided into two distinct payments:

(*i*) a lump sum gratuity based on the length of completed service, (viz., 1/30th of the average annual pay of the last three years multiplied by the completed years of service); and

(*ii*) an annual pension, terminating with the officer's death.

N.B.—The pension previously admissible was so reduced that the actuarially calculated cost of the new scheme cost Government neither less nor more than the pre-1909 pensionary scheme.

326. The distinctive feature of the revised scheme is that the gratuity, subject to a minimum of a year's pay, is payable to the deceased's estate in the case of any officer with not less than five years' service who dies in service.

327. We recommend that Government examine the desirability of revising their Pension Rules on some such lines.

D.—CLERICAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE ESTABLISHMENT

Position of Temporary Clerks

328. In Bengal the problem of the temporary clerk has assumed considerable importance—

(1) because in the past Government's policy has been to refuse to convert a temporary post into a permanent one until they are satisfied that the work to be done is of a permanent character and (even before the creation of the vast number of temporary posts to deal with work arising out of war conditions) it might be several years before an increase in the volume of work of an office was accepted as of a permanent character; and

(2) because the treatment accorded to holders of temporary posts who have no lien on a permanent post—such persons are commonly (and conveniently) referred to as "outsiders"—is undoubtedly harsh.

329. In Bengal, unlike the practice in other Provinces or under the Central Government, temporary posts ordinarily carry a fixed

pay equal to the minimum of the time scale of the corresponding permanent post where such exists: further in order that the "outsider" who officiates in a permanent post may not receive a fortuitous advantage not admissible to the "outsider" serving in a temporary post the Government of Bengal have restricted the application of Fundamental Rule 22 (*vide* Fundamental Rule 31A and Bengal Service Rule 56).

Reduction in the Number of Temporary Clerks

330. It may be accepted that the need to employ temporary staff can never be eliminated completely but it will be agreed that temporary employment should be reduced to a minimum. We endorse the views expressed in the following extract from paragraph 539 of the Royal Commission on the Civil Service (in the United Kingdom) 1929-31.

331. "The MacDonnell Commission suggested that 'in order to justify "establishment" (i.e., a permanent pensionable post) it is a necessary condition that the work to be done should be permanent in character.' We do not regard this as the test to be applied. The fact that a Department or a group of Departments is called upon to undertake temporary work does not of itself justify the employment of temporary staff for its performance. In our view the criterion should be whether the employment of pensionable staff involves a risk of redundancy. If within an appropriate zone the total volume of work, permanent and temporary together, does not normally fluctuate outside certain limits, it should be possible for that volume to be performed by pensionable staff without risk of redundancy. Where the total volume, permanent and temporary together, is fairly steady, temporary employment can be reduced to a minimum."

332. We believe that in normal times the number of temporary clerks could be reduced to insignificant proportions if—

(*a*) *in the districts*—

the permanent establishment of the district office were so increased as to provide men to fill—

(*i*) the Chapman permanent duty posts, suitably increased if necessary in the light of later developments;

(*ii*) a "temporary posts" reserve to man temporary posts (whether sanctioned by the Collector under delegated powers or by Government) other than those of a purely seasonal character; and

(*iii*) a leave reserve for (*i*) and (*ii*);

(*b*) *in the Secretariat*—

a similar "temporary posts" reserve were created for the Secretariat as a whole and placed under the control of the newly created Organisation and Methods Division. These "temporary posts" reserves would be *permanent* in the same way as are those comprising the existing leave reserves.

Conditions of Service of Temporary Clerks

333. There remains the question of the conditions upon which, when temporary employment is unavoidable, "outsiders" should be employed. This question is intimately bound up with the method of recruitment prescribed for the corresponding permanent post and it is difficult to generalise. Where the rules prescribe recruitment by an annual open competitive examination and are designed to prevent dilution by the appointment of persons selected in any other way, there is much to be said for the prescription of terms which will emphasise that employment in a temporary capacity in such posts gives no claim to permanent employment. Where as in district offices the District Officer has been directed to give preference to the temporary men and to appoint some one from outside the service only when no suitable temporary man is available (*vide* paragraph 8 of the Revenue Department No. 8354Misc., dated the 31st July, 1939) there is full provision for the absorption of suitable temporary clerks into permanent vacancies and the question of the conditions upon which they should be employed while holding temporary posts is of less importance.

334. On the whole however in those spheres in which Government normally employ a permanent and pensionable staff, we cannot but regard the employment of persons year after year on a fixed pay as harsh and undesirable and when temporary employment is unavoidable we recommend the adoption of the practice followed by the Central and other Provincial Governments, of giving increments, and of counting continuous temporary service immediately preceding appointment to a permanent post for superannuation pension.

Sub-Grade in District Offices

335. In 1938 Government accepted the recommendation made in paragraphs 42-48 of Mr. Chapman's report on the establishments of district and subdivisional offices and split the lower division into—

(1) a sub-grade on Rs.35—2/2—55.

(2) lower division proper on Rs.35—35—40—4/2—68—3/2—80.

336. The grounds on which Mr. Chapman recommended this re-organisation of the lower clerical grade in district offices were—

(1) the existence in these offices of a considerable volume of work of a routine character requiring no great capacity or experience to perform; and

(2) the need for some machinery to separate at a fairly early stage in their service the promising clerks from those lacking promise so as to give the former a chance of promotion while confining the latter to a grade more commensurate than the present lower division with their restricted capacity.

In the first place we are very doubtful whether the mere formation of a sub-grade will result in the separation of the sheep from the goats which it was designed to achieve because in our opinion a head of an office who is not prepared to enforce an efficiency bar against an inefficient clerk is not any more likely to deny him promotion to the lower division proper when his turn comes. In the second place we question whether the time scale Rs.35—2/2—55 represents a fair living wage for the class of men which it is desired to recruit and we feel that it will be both in the interest of the State and fairer to the individual to get rid of the "incorrigible" goat rather than retain him in service on this pay.

337. Mr. Chapman's instructions were to enquire into, and report upon, the adequacy of staff in district offices and it seems doubtful if Government appreciated that in accepting his recommendation to create a sub-grade Government reduced the average monthly pay of the district lower division clerk by just over Rs.2 although at the time of the general downward revision of pays between 1931 and 1934 the pay of these officers, together with all other pays not exceeding Rs.80 per mensem, had deliberately been left untouched.

338. We recommend the abolition of the sub-grade.

Amalgamation of the B.C.S. and the B.J.C.S.

339. The proposal to amalgamate the two Provincial Executive Services is one that has been considered on many occasions and both in the memoranda addressed to the Committee and in the oral evidence tendered by the B.J.C.S. Association the case for amalgamation was ably stated.

340. We do not propose to reiterate the grounds on which amalgamation is urged. It is true that the Junior service is in practice often interchangeable with the Senior and that particular duties, e.g., those of Treasury Officer, Khas Mahal Officer, Certificate Officer, etc., may be entrusted one day to a member of the Senior service and the next to a Sub-Deputy. That however is not the whole story nor does such interchange imply that there is neither good ground nor real necessity, for two separate cadres.

341. We have given the question our very careful consideration and for the following reasons we are convinced that the services

should remain separate—

(1) there is a large number of routine posts in the present B.J.C.S. cadre for which the qualities essential in the higher ranks of the Provincial Service are not required and to fill which with B.C.S. men would not be economical; and

(2) the interests of the administration require that those members of the Provincial Service who are to be the District Officers or Secretaries of the future must get training in the acceptance of responsibilities at as early an age as possible and the creation of a single cadre including a large number of routine posts would militate against this ideal and tend to defer to an even later stage the appointment of Provincial Service officers both as Subdivisional Officers and to listed posts.

342. On the other hand we recommend the following measures to ensure that the prospects of the Junior service shall not be prejudiced by the large expansion of that cadre which will be necessary to provide a Circle Officer for each rural thana—

(1) the strength of the two cadres should be refixed by upgrading the posts down-graded in Mr. Robertson's review in 1938; and

(2) the composition of the B.C.S. cadre should gradually be brought up to a point at which the number of direct recruits and promotees are equal and thereafter each vacancy should be filled by direct recruitment or promotion according as the vacancy is that of a direct recruit or a promotee.

343. We may add that according to actuarial calculations made for us by Professor K. B. Madhava, M.A., A.I.A. (LOND.), the proposed change in the method of recruitment to the B.C.S. would increase the prospects of the B.J.C.S. for promotion very materially in spite of the large expansion in the B.J.C.S. cadre.

Equalisation of Prospects of Officers Serving in Districts and in Secretariat

344. With a view to secure in the higher Secretariat posts greater continuity and the more intimate knowledge which the problems thrown up by modern conditions demand we have recommended that officers found suitable for work in the Secretariat should ordinarily be retained in the Secretariat from their 15th year of service onwards. The adoption of this course will divide the senior members of the Executive branch of the I.C.S. into two sections, the one for service in the Secretariat and the other in the districts and will mean that some 50 per cent. of the I.C.S. will not get the opportunity at any stage in their career of service in the *Secretariat*, but will not to the same extent be

excluded from service in Calcutta. It would bode ill for the development of the Province if service in the Districts involved any diminution of prospects or came to be regarded as in any way inferior to service in the Secretariat and an essential prerequisite of any such division as we have suggested would be to assure to the district cadre prospects reasonably equivalent to those of their brother officers serving in the Secretariat.

345. Elsewhere we have recommended the abolition of the posts of Divisional Commissioners and while we regard the District cadre as the natural recruiting ground for the members of the enlarged Board of Revenue, to provide prospects reasonably equivalent to those in the Secretariat it will be necessary to provide a number of District appointments on Secretariat pays.

346. In our opinion administrative considerations rule out any question of attaching these higher pays to particular district appointments, and the only practicable solution we can suggest is the abolition of the present fixed pays for Secretaryships and the creation in either cadre, the Secretariat and the Districts, of a number of selection grade appointments. We are of opinion that these selection grade appointments might appropriately be of two grades, an upper on Rs.2,500—100—3,000 and a lower on Rs.2,000—100—2,500. Any officer, whether in the Secretariat or the Districts, not drawing pay in a selection grade would draw grade pay irrespective of the post in which he was serving. This would of course involve the abolition of the special pay now attached to the posts of Joint and Deputy Secretaries.

347. If in place of the present dozen or so Secretaryships on Rs.2,750 say 5 posts in the upper selection grade and 7 in the lower were created and a proportionate number of posts in both selection grades were created for the District cadre, it should be simple enough to frame a scheme that would reasonably equalise the prospects of the two cadres and would not involve a materially larger outlay on the service as a whole than at present.

348. Our proposals will similarly divide the B.C.S. cadre into two sections, the one for service in the Secretariat, the other for service in the Districts. In order to equate the prospects of these two sections, we recommend that—

(1) the listed posts should be divided proportionately between the Districts and the Secretariat, the object being to provide approximately equal prospects over a long term;

(2) A B.C.S. officer other than the holder of a listed post when appointed a Deputy Secretary should draw pay in the time-scale Rs.900—50—1,150;

(3) there should be a proportionate number of selection grade appointments on the same scale in the District section of the B.C.S. cadre. The number of these appointments will require detailed examination, and will be based upon long-term trends. There should not be frequent variations, in an effort to keep proportions always exact;

(4) a B.C.S. officer holding a post of Under Secretary (now, Assistant Secretary) shall draw grade pay only. A member of the clerical services who is appointed as Under Secretary will automatically enjoy B.C.S. pay. Our intention is merely to recommend the abolition of the special pay of Rs.100 a month now drawn by Assistant Secretaries, and this recommendation should not be read as ruling out the grant of such compensatory allowance, if any, as may be justified to meet the higher cost of living in Calcutta.

Living Conditions in the Mufassal

349. In considering the prospects of officers at Headquarters and the Districts, more than questions of pay is involved. We do not propose to attempt to summarise the pros and cons of service in the mufassal and in Calcutta but the evidence received by us makes it clear that as matters now stand service in Calcutta, and particularly in the Secretariat, is more popular among most officers and the mere equalisation of the pays of the two sections will in all probability not stop the present urge to secure a posting in Calcutta.

350. To counter this urge and to make service in the Districts more attractive we recommend the following measures—

(*i*) Residences of District Officers and of other officers of comparable status should be provided with baths, wash basins and modern sanitation.

(*ii*) Every District Officer's residence should have a separate office room for his confidential assistant and a reasonable waiting-room for official visitors. In calculating the standard rent of the residence an allowance should be made in respect of this accommodation and the rent should be based on the capital outlay so reduced.

(*iii*) For every Class I residence the compound of which is one acre or more, one *mali* should be provided at Government expense. Consideration should also be given to the reduction of the size of the compounds.

351. We have been told that the allowances admissible to officers on transfer are quite inadequate and that without taking into account the inevitable damage to furniture in transit (in Bengal most transfers involve a break in gauge and perhaps a journey by steamer) an officer is almost invariably out of pocket.

352. The impression we have formed is that transfers are far too frequent and we recommend that officers should not ordinarily be transferred under three years.

353. We believe the provision of basic furniture in Government residences would be generally welcome and would save officers much worry and expense at times of transfer.

354. No one, we believe, will dispute that it is undesirable that an officer should be materially out of pocket as a result of a transfer and while appreciating the difficulty of providing for every contingency we recommend that the new Establishment Division of the Chief Minister's office should be instructed to examine this question and to suggest amendments to the existing rules so that the allowances admissible on transfer will ordinarily cover the reasonable cost of an officer's move from his old to his new station.

355. A minor inequality at Headquarters requires treatment. We see no reason why the Provincial Services working in Calcutta should not receive house-allowances corresponding to those enjoyed by the I.C.S., and we recommend accordingly.

CHAPTER X

Local Self-Governing Bodies

356. We are required by our terms of reference to consider how Local Self-Governing Institutions can best be used as an efficient adjunct to administration. We cannot do better than consider each type of Local Body in turn.

A.—MUNICIPALITIES

357. Though the quality of administration in Bengal's **119** Municipalities is said to vary greatly, there is agreement that the general standard is depressingly low. The reasons are as follows:—

Size of Municipalities

358. Section 3(34) of Act XV of **1932** defines a Municipality as "any place in which this Act or any part thereof is in force". Section 6(1) (*i*) directs that the Act shall not be applied to towns of less than 3,000 inhabitants, resident in an average density of 1,000 to the square mile. It is suggested that the leniency of these conditions has led to the establishment of many petty Municipalities, with resources so inadequate that, from the time of their creation, they have had to struggle to balance their daily accounts, and have found it impossible to carry out any scheme of major improvement, or to provide those amenities which urban dwellers may reasonably expect.

359. We agree that there is no virtue in the creation of a Municipality, with its expensive machinery of administration and its formidable overhead charges, if such Municipality can do little more than pay its staff, and if its inhabitants get no greater benefits than they would in a well-run Union Board. We have examined the list of Municipalities, and we have noted that there are many which have a population of under 20,000. Three, indeed, are shown as having a population of less than three thousand (Birnagar, Nalchiti and Old Malda), while others, though they reach the three thousand mark, do not fulfil the condition regarding density—Chandrakona, Khirpai and North Dum Dum.

360. We therefore recommend that the record of every Municipality with a population of under 20,000 be examined, to see whether there is any justification for its continued existence, or whether it could, to the advantage of the local people, be amalgamated with some neighbouring body. Powers to withdraw the Act from any area, or to unite two or more areas, already exist (section 8 of Act XV of **1932**), and it is in the public interest that these powers should be used, to weed out those Municipalities which are ineffective, and to amalgamate those which, united, may be expected to provide their inhabitants with the services normally associated with the word "municipal".

361. In no area does amalgamation, as distinct from abolition, appear more calculated to improve administration than in the industrial zone around Calcutta. It is true that on both sides of the Hooghly there exist Municipalities which are splendidly run, but it is also true that some of the Province's most impotent bodies lie within the industrial area; bodies with little record of public achievement, with no hospitals or amenities, and so bankrupt of resources that they are incapable of improving the distressing conditions in which most of their inhabitants live. Ribbon building, encroachments and contempt of local authority are inevitable when local authority is unable to provide efficient services or to enforce its own laws.

362. We realise that if the riparian Municipalities are to be consolidated into groups, the richer ones will have to share their resources with those which are poorer; but if the area is to be properly developed, the problem must be considered as a whole, and parochial interests must be subordinated to the general good. The Act admittedly provides (section 87) for the formation of Joint Committees for the resolution of joint problems, but it does not appear to us that such co-operation has been attempted, or that the Municipalities have combined for the provision of hospitals or similar services. The First Aid Posts and the Emergency Hospitals, the relief centres and the excellent Fire Service, are all War's creation, and it would be a tragedy if, through lack of resources and lack of a common policy, corresponding benefits were to disappear with the Peace.

363. We therefore recommend that the Municipalities in the industrial area be amalgamated into groups which will be sufficiently influential and resourceful to ensure a high and uniform standard of municipal services on both banks of the Hooghly. We believe that such amalgamation would result in increased efficiency, and in economy.

364. South of Calcutta lie three suburban Municipalities, some of which are already dependent upon the City for a portion of their amenities. If there is to be any planned development of Calcutta, and if the crowded citizens are to be encouraged to live in the suburbs, it appears to us most desirable that these three Municipalities should be amalgamated with the Calcutta Corporation, and that the very extensive rural areas within their boundaries should be developed as residential sites, with the modern amenities which only a great city can provide. It has been written that Calcutta is one of the few big cities in the modern world to record no outward movement to the suburban areas, and it is suggested that the explanation is to be found in the bad communications and unhealthy environment in the areas around the city. As a result, the city's centre becomes more congested, whilst

around its borders has grown up a belt of slums, effectively discouraging the citizens from making their homes in the countryside beyond.

365. It has been objected that any increase in the area to be controlled by the Corporation would be unwise; that the Corporation is big enough already; and that its record of administration inspires no confidence. We have no desire to enter into controversy; we are concerned only with suggesting improvements; and it is our belief that no great city can develop satisfactorily if it is hedged in by malarious villages, and by local bodies which have not the resources to undertake substantial schemes of development.

366. If this recommendation is not accepted, we would urge that the southern Municipalities should consider the advisability of uniting amongst themselves.

Lack of Funds

367. We have been told that genuine poverty is at the root of many Municipalities' misfortunes, which confirms us in our belief that municipal status has been granted too readily. If there is little or no taxable capacity, the area must be developed before the tax-gatherer can profitably be sent on his rounds; but if there is taxable capacity, which is not being taxed, then clearly the local administrators are responsible. The relationship between taxation and the benefits which the taxing authority can confer is not always recognised; while those who rely upon the votes of the people may hesitate to enforce the collection of rates and taxes. The voter, conscious of his relative immunity, pays his dues sparingly or not at all, yet is pained to observe that his drains go uncleaned, and that one by one the street lights are extinguished. In the "Resolution on the Working of Municipalities, 1940-41", published in February, 1943, it is written—

> "The rate-payers too must bear their share of responsibility for the present state of affairs, as they have generally shown very little civic sense and little realisation of the fact that public amenities cannot be had unless they are paid for."

368. Amongst the suggestions offered to us for overcoming this reluctance to tax and to pay taxes is one, originating with two Municipal Chairmen, that Government should take over the work of the tax-collector, thereby improving collections, and sparing Municipal Commissioners from odium. Although we appreciate the embarrassment which attaches to the imposition of a tax upon a friend, and, even more, to its subsequent forcible realisation, and although we are conscious of the fact that a vigorous Vice-Chairman may jeopardise all chances of his own and his colleagues' re-election, we consider that the realisation of municipal taxes by a Government agency would be a very retrograde step. It is

essential that the responsibility for the imposition of the taxes and for their collection should lie with the elected Commissioners, and any attempt to divest them of this responsibility should be strenuously resisted. We agree, however, that the machinery for the collection of taxes must be improved, and we accordingly recommend that each Municipality should have its Executive Officer.

369. This Executive Officer should have powers similar to those exercised by the Executive Officers in Madras, who are governed by the Madras District Municipalities Act (Act V of 1920). He will be appointed by the Municipality, in consultation with the Public Service Commission, and half his salary will be paid by his employer, and half by Government, the salary varying with the class of Municipality. He will be removable only after the passing of a resolution supported by two-thirds of the Municipal Commissioners, confirmed by Government. We believe that the existence of such an officer in every municipality will greatly improve collections, and will ensure that, even when the Chairman is absent or otherwise engaged, Municipal affairs will continue to run smoothly.

370. We have given anxious consideration to a suggestion that these officers should form part of a "Municipal Service", appointed and paid for by Government, and transferable when occasion arises. The suggestion has obvious merits; it would ensure independence of views and it would provide for the exchange of officers from one Municipality to another if the relationships between a Municipality and its officer become unhappy. Nevertheless, the majority view of the Committee is that the Executive Officer should be a Municipal servant, rather than a member of a provincial service; and it will be for the Inspectorate of Local Bodies to watch out for friction, and to remove the cause before the breach is too great. We would, however, advise that qualifications for candidature (which we distinguish clearly from those considerations which influence selection) should be laid down in detail, on a provincial basis.

Neglect on part of Government

371. A third factor which has stood in the way of Municipal development is the manner in which local self-governing bodies have been neglected, both by Writers' Buildings and by local Government officers. Little has been done to guide or to encourage Municipalities, inspections have been few and generally superficial, and there have been serious delays in dealing with files relating to Municipal matters. We may instance the facts that the Hackney Carriage Rules of one Municipality have been pending five years for Government's approval, and that another Municipality has waited two years for a permit to buy some iron sheeting with which to repair its conservancy carts. Above all, may we instance the

delays which have occurred in the gazetting of nominations, samples of which we append—

Name of Municipality.		Date of receipt of local officers' nominations.	Date of issue of Government order.
Bansberia	..	12th May, 1943	4th November, 1944.
Baruipur	..	24th July, 1943	14th November, 1944.
Basirhat	..	5th March, 1943	3rd November, 1944.
Dinajpur	..	8th July, 1943	26th May, 1944.
Joynagar-Majilpur	..	23rd July, 1943	7th November, 1944.
Kamarhati	..	4th February, 1943	21st August, 1944.
Murshidabad	..	April, 1943	(Not issued up to time of writing.)
Serampore	..	11th January, 1944	19th October, 1944.

372. Unfortunately, such delays are typical; they bring Government into disrepute, and lead to confusion in municipal affairs. What local body can have a heart in its business if months elapse, and even the receipt of its proposals is unacknowledged? What newly elected Commissioner can retain his enthusiasm, if the years pass, and he is unable to take his seat? It is easy to criticise local self-governing bodies for their inefficiency, for their inability to effect improvements, for the persistent inaccuracy of their returns and for the manner in which they have allowed encroachments on the public way; but Government's own record has not always been one of promptness or of understanding, and the Grand Trunk Road, as it goes northwards from Howrah, is an outstanding example of what private greed and official negligence can accomplish.

373. We have recommended elsewhere that the Portfolio of Public Health and Medical be separated from Local Self-Government, and we believe that such a division will help to relieve the delays which sometimes occur. We have also proposed that there should be a small Inspectorate of Local Bodies, which will be attached to the Ministry of Local Self-Government, and which will work in close collaboration with the District Officer and with the Examiners of Local Accounts. We have also recommended that the system of nominations should be abolished, a recommendation which holds good for Municipalities, subject to the creation of industrial and of minority constituencies as contemplated under sections 18 and 19 of the Act. Government's local technical officers (for example, the Civil Surgeon, the Executive Engineer and the Superintendent of Police) should have the right to attend Municipal Meetings when matters of importance concerning their departments are tabled for discussion; but such attendance will be in the capacity of adviser, and will carry no right to vote.

374. The District Officer, vested in the Divisional Commissioner's stead with appropriate powers under section 544 of the Act and aided by the Inspector of Local Bodies, will maintain a closer supervision than previously over Municipal finances; and we recommend that he be given greater powers to dispose of audit objections, many of which are so petty that they should never have to go to Government. We believe that the local officers are far better judges of such cases than any central authority can hope to be, and we see no reason why the Ministry should be clogged by these trifles, to the detriment of work which is far more important.

375. Armed with these extra powers, and closely in touch with municipal affairs, we believe that the District Officer will be far more useful to Municipal bodies than he has been in the past. Nevertheless, should the Municipalities show persistent incompetence, we think that Government should not hesitate to use, promptly and firmly, the powers of supersession which the Act confers.

Town and Country Planning Act

376. We believe that the recommendations which we have made will improve the day-to-day administration of the Municipalities, and will help in the provision of better Municipal services; but it will need more than Executive Officers and an Inspectorate to ensure the development of urban areas on proper lines—it will need legislation in the shape of a "Town and Country Planning Act". Extensive though the powers conferred by statute on the Calcutta Corporation are, and powerful though the consolidated Municipalities may become, those powers extend only to their boundaries, and the carelessness or obstructiveness of some neighbouring union board may jeopardise the health of the urban populace, or the success of some costly scheme of improvement. Local planning is of value, and Municipal authorities can do a great deal; but no organisation can live in isolation, no matter what its size may be, and there must be some authority to exercise control over the Province's urbanisation as a whole.

377. In England this has been recognised, both by the establishment of a Ministry of Town and Country Planning, and by the voluntary association of adjacent local bodies in the carrying out of schemes of common interest. Garden cities, satellite towns and trading estates are being set up in the rural areas in an effort to prevent the excessive centralisation of industry, with its cumulative disadvantages of congestion, high rentals and long daily journeys to and from work, but no similar tendency has been noted in Bengal; on the contrary, the congestion in and around the capital city increases, and urban development continues to take place on the old, unsatisfactory, un-co-ordinated and wasteful lines.

378. We therefore recommend that a Provincial Town and Country Planning Bill be prepared, which will divide the Province

into regions, each under an authority consisting of representatives of the local bodies situated within the region. It will be the duty of the Regional authority to co-ordinate the development work of the local bodies lying within its jurisdiction, to prepare and to examine plans affecting more than one local body, and to report to the Provincial authority, which will be responsible for the supervision and co-ordination of the activities of the Regional authorities. The existence of these authorities will not absolve local bodies from carrying out improvements within their own boundaries; the authorities are intended to prevent disjointed, haphazard development. It will be for Government to consider whether the authorities should be given powers and resources similar to those now enjoyed by the Calcutta Improvement Trust; though we may observe in passing that the Trust's powers especially in respect of the utilisation of sites, do not appear to us to be adequate. Whatever financial resources may be placed at the authorities' disposal, we are unanimous in our recommendation that the authorities should have the widest powers for the prevention of the reckless un-co-ordinated location of industry, and for the insistence upon ordered development.

Calcutta and the 24-Parganas

379. The City of Calcutta is subject to the control of various authorities, including the Chief Presidency Magistrate, the Commissioner of Police, the Corporation of Calcutta, the Collector of Calcutta, and the District Magistrate and Collector of the 24-Parganas. We do not regard this arrangement as satisfactory, and we recommend—

(*a*) that the revenue functions now performed by the Collector of 24-Parganas within the city be transferred to the Collector of Calcutta (i.e., supervision of revenue and khas-mahal collections, certificate work, etc.); and

(*b*) that the work of the Police Magistrates of Alipore and Sealdah be subordinated to the Chief Presidency Magistrate, instead of to the District Magistrate, 24-Parganas, as it is at present.

380. These changes will ensure that the jurisdictions of the Chief Presidency Magistrate, the Corporation, the Commissioner of Police and the Collector of Calcutta are co-terminous. Should the area of the Corporation be extended, we would advise that the jurisdictions of the other authorities be extended similarly.

Summary of Recommendations regarding Municipalities

381. (1) The history of all Municipalities with a population of under 20,000 is to be examined to see whether the Act should be withdrawn from the area, or whether amalgamation is possible and desirable.

(2) The Municipalities comprised in the industrial area around Calcutta are to be amalgamated into groups.

(3) Incorporation of the Garden Reach, South Suburban and Tollygunj Municipalities within the Calcutta Corporation; or, in the alternative, amalgamation of the three municipalities.

(4) All Municipalities to have an Executive Officer, appointed by the Municipality in consultation with the Public Service Commission, with salary paid half by Government and half by the Municipality.

(5) Establishment under the new Ministry of Local Self-Government of a small Inspectorate of Local Bodies.

(6) Abolition of Municipal Nominations, coupled (*a*) with the retention of the principles of Industrial and minority constituencies, and (*b*) with the attendance at Municipal Meetings of Government's local technical experts when subjects of importance appertaining to their departments are up for discussion.

(7) The District Officer to be vested with powers of the Divisional Commissioner, and with certain powers now exercised by Provincial Government in respect of audit objections.

(8) Passing of a Provincial Town and Country Planning Act, and strengthening the Calcutta Improvement Trust Act to give the Trust greater powers.

(9) Revenue functions of the Collector of 24-Parganas within the limits of the Calcutta Corporation to be exercised by the Collector of Calcutta.

(10) Magisterial functions of the District Magistrate of the 24-Parganas within the limits of the Calcutta Corporation to be exercised by the Chief Presidency Magistrate.

B.—DISTRICT BOARDS

382. We have heard much about the District Boards in the course of our enquiry, and we have been greatly exercised as to the nature of the recommendations which we should make regarding their future. Many claims have been made, that the Boards have played their part with distinction; at the same time, there are many who have suggested that the Boards' achievements have been few, and that their records have been disappointing. If such criticism is justified, we feel that the District Boards, along with other local bodies, may have suffered from an absence of official help and guidance. Moreover, the cesses upon which the District Boards rely for the major part of their income are inelastic; and, in recent years, there has been the added difficulty of collection, and the counter claims of Primary Education Cess.

383. We learn that the provincialisation of the public health services will not long be delayed; and we understand that already many hospitals are being administered by Government. The road work of the vast post-war schemes will be carried out under the Communications, Transport and Buildings Ministry, while the Education Ministry expects that the Primary Education Act will

soon have been introduced throughout the Province. If the administration of health, of roads and of education is taken from the District Boards, what will be left to them? In such circumstances, it would seem to us that the Boards will become "functus officio", for they would be shorn of most of their activities.

384. Times have changed since the District Committees were established in 1871; and we agree that, with the coming of Provincial autonomy, it is no longer necessary to arrange "exercises in local self-government". We appreciate that the provincialisation of the health services will enable the limited resources of the Province to be used to secure uniform standards of health services; we recognise that the construction of a network of roads is a task which must be approached from a provincial rather than a district view-point; and we realise that many duties were entrusted to the District Boards prematurely, before the correct techniques were worked out. Though, therefore, questions of policy are outside our terms of reference, we can understand that Government's development plans may be better achieved under a system of provincialisation.

385. At the same time, we have real sympathy with those who believe that local interest, supervision and care are necessary to ensure that the expenditure of money upon local objects conforms with the wishes and needs of the locality, and we should be sorry if the wealth of local knowledge and experience, now concentrated in the members of the District Boards, were no longer available for the promotion of the districts' interests. Should, therefore, the time come when the District Boards are so bereft of functions as to render their continuance in their present form meaningless, we would advise that there be erected in their stead a District Advisory Board, with members elected as members of the School Board are now elected, which would meet for the discussion of local problems and for the ventilation of local grievances. This Advisory Body would elect its own Chairman, and its representatives would be freely invited to attend meetings of the District Development Board, under the chairmanship of the District Officer; for we attach great importance to the close association of Government's executive officers with non-official local advisers.

386. If the Boards' functions are thus provincialised, and if, in place of the Boards, it should be found necessary to create advisory bodies, no one who believes in the development of democratic institutions could fail to regard such an arrangement as historically retrograde, if the arrangement were intended to be *permanent*. In good time, when the road system has been built, and when the health services have been established, public opinion will doubtless press Government to hand back to local bodies the functions of which they have been temporarily relieved.

387. There is a second possibility; that Government may decide completely to provincialise only one service—that of Public Health—and that the Boards will be left with responsibility for district roads. Should this be so, the District Boards would have to remain as an executive body, but their functions would be so limited that we suggest for Government's consideration whether it might not be appropriate to return to the Boards the control of Primary Education.

388. The third possibility is that Government will proceed no further with provincialisation, and that the District Boards will remain, substantially as before. Whether they do, or whether there is only provincialisation of part of their functions, we consider that if the Boards are to remain as executive bodies certain changes, both of approach and of practice, are necessary; and we recommend accordingly—

Composition

389. We recommend the abolition of nominations, a step which would complete the journey from the purely nominated bodies of 1871 to the completely elected body of 1945. Such a change is long overdue, for a generation has passed since the official Chairman was replaced by the non-official. We would advise, as we do for Municipalities, that local technical officials should attend meetings, in an advisory capacity and without the right to vote, whenever matters of importance, relating to their special subject, come up for discussion. Where necessary, minorities should be represented by special constituencies.

390. It has been suggested to us that membership of the Legislature interferes seriously with the proper discharge of duties as Chairman or Vice-Chairman of a District Board, and that if such Chairman or Vice-Chairman were elected to the Legislature, he should resign his local appointment. It has also been suggested to us that a Chairman who is also a member of the Legislature, can render great service to the district which he represents, and can ensure that the requirements of his constituency—requirements which cannot always be met from local resources—are brought prominently to Government's notice. We appreciate both view-points, and we think we may safely leave to the good sense and public spirit of the individual the burden of decision whether his membership of the Legislature is in the interests or not of the local body, and of acting in accordance with his decision.

Contact with Government

391. To enable Government to be in closer touch with the general administration of Boards all over the Province, it has been suggested that an Advisory Board should be set up in the Provincial Headquarters, with Hon'ble Minister, Local Self-Government, as Chairman, and the Secretary of the

Ministry as Secretary. The members would be three representatives of the District Board Association, and the Board would meet at regular intervals, and whenever urgent matters arose, which related to the Province as a whole. We commend this suggestion for consideration, and with it we couple the observation, that it does not appear to us that Government has always provided as much encouragement and guidance to District Boards as the Boards merited.

Internal Administration

392. District Boards should be divided into three classes, on the basis of their population and income. There should be three grades of District Engineer, District Health Officer, Secretary and Accountant. The District Boards should appoint these officers in consultation with the Public Service Commission, and half the pay of the officers should be contributed from Provincial Revenues. The officers would not be removed without the consent of Government.

393. The Inspectorate of Local Bodies would inspect the District Boards, in the manner in which they will inspect the Municipalities.

Resources

394. To the inelasticity of resources, and to rising prices, has been added the failure to realise in full even those cesses which are due. We have recommended elsewhere that arrears of cesses should be recoverable under the Sunset Law, and if this recommendation is accepted, cess collections will certainly improve. We would also recommend that there should be an increase in the cess rate, and that cess revaluations should be carried out with the utmost punctuality. It is, for example, strange that Bogra's cess demand should be greater than that of Dacca. We also recommend that District Boards should have the right to impose rates and taxes, for it is of the essence of a self-governing body that it should be given, and should exercise the power to tax those who elect its members. It would not be unreasonable, however, to subject the exercise of this tax raising power to the approval of Government.

C.—UNION BOARDS

395. It has been said that one of the drawbacks of the old Panchayati system was that it obliged the Panchayat to collect money to pay chowkidars over whom he had no control. The Union Committees of 1885 failed, we read, because they had no funds and no functions, and were as a fifth wheel to the coach. Mr. Savage's President system broke down in part through too sudden a transfer of the control of the chowkidars from the police, with a resultant loss in chowkidari efficiency; and the Union Boards under the 1919 Act have been severely criticised, a criticism which found

expression during the Food Crisis in the creation of the parallel "union food committees", entrusted with duties which the Union Boards should certainly have performed.

396. This record is not encouraging; but, from the evidence which we have received, and from the study of past reports, we are unanimous that neither successive failures nor criticism should be permitted to deflect Government from its objective; the setting up in the villages of local self-governing bodies. We need not recapitulate the necessity for such bodies, or the benefits which may derive from them, both locally and as schools for political and administrative training; but we must stress the importance of ensuring that the Union Board is properly and firmly established, for few things will contribute more to "rural reconstruction and development" than a well-run public-spirited Union Board.

397. A feature common to all the attempts which have been made to establish local self-governing units has been the inadequacy, amounting at times almost to the absence, of supervision. Supervision is not incompatible with, it is necessary for, the growth of any institution, even though that institution may be described as "self-governing". The need for supervision was fully realised by the District Administration Committee of 1913-14; and it was on the strength of that Committee's recommendations that the Circle Officer was introduced. In common, we are afraid, with many posts in Bengal, that of the Circle Officer was quickly extended to cover many more activities than originally intended; and it would be no exaggeration to say that the Circle Officer now spends not much more than a quarter of his time on Union Boards; the rest being occupied with the multitude of new duties which it has been convenient, though probably unwise, to impose upon him. Instead, therefore, of fostering the Union Boards, and of bringing them to that stage of development at which they could do a great deal of the work now done by the Circle Officer, Government has deprived them of the Circle Officer's guidance, and has left them very much to their own uninstructed devices. Apart from the annual audit, and from an occasional visit, the Circle Officer finds little time for the Union Board, and even less for the fostering of the principles of local self-government. He is immersed in so many other duties, his area is so big, and his communications are so few, that he rarely sees the same board more than twice before being posted elsewhere, and has no opportunities of consolidating those personal contacts which are so vital. What is worse, he often does not even live in his circle, and much of his time is wasted in travelling long distances, his tour programme being dictated not by the general problems of his circle, so much as by the necessity for sending prompt replies to questions showered upon him by every department.

398. To these disadvantages has been added the fact that though the 1913-14 Committee recommended not more than 30 or so unions

for each officer, several charges contain almost double that number. We believe, that in this combination of causes is to be found one of the main reasons why Union Boards have so far failed to play the part of which they are capable in the development of the country; and this is one of the reasons why we have recommended, in an earlier Chapter, that there should be one Circle Officer for every thana, and that he should live within his circle, in a residence either built or rented on his behalf by Government. We consider that in the present state of the country's communications, and in view of the absence of adequate reserves of trained technical personnel, it is for the time being better to limit him to the performance of certain functions only. We are confident that the establishment of a Circle Officer in each thana will make available to the Union Boards that guidance and assistance which they need, and which, up to now, have been granted them but sparingly.

399. In addition to the District Officer and his staff, the Union Board looks to the District Board for advice and assistance, and we have received a proposal that the Boards should be attached through the Circle Officers to the District Board, rather than to the District Officer, and that the District Board should supplement the income of the Union Boards by extra augmentation grants. We are not attracted by the idea that the Union Boards should live upon the charity of the District Board, or, indeed, upon any one's charity; nor do we feel, with one exception, that the transfer of the Boards to the sole authority of the District Board (which would mean that Circle Officers would have to serve two masters), is appropriate. We are, therefore, not inclined to tamper with the existing provisions regarding the relationship between the District Board and the Union Boards; though with the abolition of the posts of Commissioner, the District Officer will be entrusted with many of the Commissioner's functions (e.g., under sections 55A and 56) the Subdivisional Officer stepping, in such matters, into the District Officer's shoes.

400. We learnt that Union Boards vary greatly in size and in population, and it has been suggested to us that it would be sound if some uniformity could be secured. Without laying down any hard or fast rules, we agree that the average Union should have an area of about ten square miles, and a population of some 10,000; but we consider that it would be most unwise and unprofitable to attempt to alter boundaries to secure such uniformity, save where the existing Unions are manifestly unwieldy, either on account of the absence of communications or through density of population.

401. We have heard with surprise that it is extremely difficult to secure nine competent men in the average Union, capable of managing it with efficiency and disinterestedness. We find this hard to believe, for though in certain rural areas there may be an absence of men with high educational qualifications, we have no doubt that even in the remoter areas, there must be many, sound of

judgment and well versed in village affairs, in whom the people have faith, and upon whom Government could place reliance. As with District Boards and with Municipalities, so with Union Boards, there should be no nominations. Indeed, we consider that the continuance of the system of nominations will be particularly dangerous in Union Boards, where a Circle Officer's value will increase the more he can keep free from local politics, and where his utility and even prestige are seriously impaired by the fact that he has to favour this or that individual when the time comes for nomination. The nine members, then, should all be elected by the people; and, if a simple form of secret ballot can be devised, so much the better. Once the members have been elected, and have chosen their President, it will be for them to administer the Board to the best of their ability; and in this connection we record a suggestion which has been made to us; namely, that each member should assume special responsibility for one of the activities of the Union, just as a Minister assumes a portfolio. The Union Board President, as Chief Minister, and his other members, as "Ministers in charge of this or that portfolio" would be jointly responsible for the Union's activities, but each would be expected to devote himself to the successful carrying out of a particular activity.

402. Although we are satisfied that a Union of ten thousand inhabitants will have no difficulty in producing nine men of the right type, we agree that honorary workers, most of whom must be busy in the management of their private affairs, will need clerical assistance of a type superior to that which the average Union Board now enjoys. We, therefore, propose that each Union Board should be provided with a clerk, who will be paid by Government; who will be appointed and dismissible by the Subdivisional Officer, and who will be a resident within the Union. This clerk will not be part of any service; he will not be transferable; he will be a servant of the Union Board, and he will normally be a member of the majority community within the Union. We believe that a full-time, well-paid clerk of this type will ensure a great improvement in Union Board management, and will enable the Boards to discharge their functions with greater efficiency.

403. It has been brought to our notice that no satisfactory solution has yet been discovered for the problems connected with control of the chowkidars, unfortunate beings called upon to serve numerous masters, servants of the President and of his colleagues, servants of the police and of the magistracy, receiving their pittances often months in arrears. Today, just as seventy years ago, "their beats, deserted to the midnight stars, cry out for vengeance"; and though tribute has been paid to the manner in which, despite the pettiness of their earnings, they have refrained from crime, it is generally agreed that, in crime's prevention and detection, they are playing a steadily decreasing role. The late Sir Nicholas Blandy and his Committee examined the position in

the course of detailed enquiries which lasted a year; and though his Report has been with Government for five years, we understand that no action has been taken upon his recommendations. In the matter of the salaries and control of the chowkidars, we can give no better advice to Government than that which was contained in the Chowkidari Report, which we accordingly commend to Government's further consideration.

404. Every institution complains of shortage of funds, and we agree that the average Union Board raises so little under section 37(*b*) that real improvement is quite impossible. We accept the position that many inhabitants are so poor that any increase in their tax would be a hardship; but we believe that the maximum rate could be increased, and we subscribe to the recommendations of the Blandy Committee in this respect. We would also point out that any policy which makes grants-in-aid to mushroom growths, while neglecting statutory bodies, is one which asks for trouble. It is most unwise to erect parallel organisations to carry out work which existing bodies should do, or which they are doing badly. The remedy lies either in the abolition of the existing body, and in its replacement by something new; or, in the remodelling of the existing body.

405. We accordingly recommend that the Union Food and Development Committees be abolished, and that their functions be performed by the Union Boards. We appreciate that the change-over will involve some confusion and dislocation, but the difficulties will be only temporary, while the existing dual system seems likely to give rise to perpetual disputes and jealousies. We consider it extremely unsound that there should exist, side by side, one statutory body empowered and enjoined to effect rural improvements, but apparently not expected to do so; and another body, this time created by executive orders, to which this task has been entrusted. If the village committees are to continue, and we see no reasons why they should not, they should do so as appendages of the Union Boards.

406. The Village Self-Government Act catalogues a formidable list of things which a Union Board must do, and an even longer list of things which it may do. (Chapter IV, Act V of 1919.) Comprehensive as the lists are, we think that it should clearly be laid down that a Union Board should, to the extent required by the District Officer, and within the limits of available funds, carry out such duties as the District Officer may from time to time call upon them to perform.

Summary of Recommendations regarding Union Boards

407 (*a*) The Union Boards, though full of great promise have hitherto failed to realise the hopes entertained of them, largely because they have lacked guidance. This defect will be lessened by the appointment of a Circle Officer to each thana.

(*b*) The area of some Union Boards may be too great for proper management by the Board. Such exceptional cases may have their boundaries modified, but generally we are opposed to any tampering with existing union boundaries.

(*c*) All members of the Union Board should be elected, by secret ballot, if possible.

(*d*) Each Union Board should have a full-time clerk. This clerk will be a local man, belonging to the majority community in the Union, paid by Government, appointed and dismissible by the Subdivisional Officer.

(*e*) The recommendations of the Blandy Committee regarding the numbers of chowkidars and the amount of their pay, should be accepted.

(*f*) Increase of the maximum rate from Rs.84 to Rs.200.

(*g*) Abolition of the Union Food and Development Committees.

CHAPTER XI

Conclusion

408. We have come to the end of the task committed to us. We believe that we have produced the blue print of a machine and proposals to secure its efficient operation to enable the Government of Bengal to discharge efficiently and promptly the manifold and complex tasks which will confront them in the post-war period.

Implementation of the Report

409. We are naturally exercised to see that our report does not suffer the same fate as many of the reports of Committees which have preceded us during the last 20 years. We asked for a statement showing how many of the recommendations of the Committees (other than Retrenchment Committees) which had been appointed by the Government in the last 20 years had been adopted. The replies which we have received up to the date of signing our report have been far from complete, but they show clearly that the deliberations of our predecessors have had little influence on the course of events. In one of the replies sent to us relating to a Committee which reported some five years ago, it was stated that one of its recommendations was receiving the attention of Government and that another was under the earnest consideration of Government. It is a sad commentary on governmental methods of working that five years should elapse before a firm decision is taken one way or the other on the recommendations of a Committee.

410. We have every reason to think that this delay is largely due to the way in which reports of Committees have been handled in the past. The practice seems to have been to cut up the report, paste the various sections on interminable broadsheets and refer them for separate examination by the branches of the Secretariat thought to be immediately concerned with particular recommendations.

411. This is no way to treat the report of a Government Committee. We strongly urge that a senior officer should be placed on special duty immediately, charged with the task of obtaining the decisions of Cabinet on the principles involved in each of our main recommendations, and thereafter be made responsible for seeing that appropriate action is promptly taken to implement the Cabinet's decision and for reporting to the Government when, in his view, action is being unduly delayed.

Two Short-term Problems

412. There are two short-term problems which strictly lie outside our terms of reference and which therefore we have excluded from the body of our report. They seem to us, however, to be of sufficient importance to justify our calling attention to them in this concluding Chapter.

413. When the war in Europe is over, there is a serious risk that, for a period, Government will find itself sadly short of experienced personnel. Members of business firms who have public-spiritedly placed their services at the disposal of Government during the war will not unnaturally seek to return to their Companies; civil servants who, under the Rules, have qualified for retirement but who have stayed on during the war period, will equally not unnaturally seek release; many others who have laboured under a heavy strain for years without leave will be in urgent need of a long vacation, both on grounds of health and on grounds of the maintenance of their efficiency as officials; other Provincial Governments who have spared their officials to help Bengal will be faced with similar problems and will be in no position to increase their help, even if they are able to maintain it; it will necessarily be some time before the deficiencies in the permanent cadre resulting from the suspension of recruitment during the war can be made good. There will therefore be a period of a year or so during which staffs in the Province will be greatly depleted at a time when the pressure of problems facing the Government will be no less than it is at present. It is difficult to suggest any effective remedy for dealing with the resultant gap. The only suggestion that occurs to us is to attempt to engage on short-term contracts, officers with administrative or technical experience from the fighting forces or elsewhere.

414. The other problem which seems to us to call for much more realistic and resolute action than appears to be contemplated at present is that of dealing with the large numbers of men who will be released from the forces and civil defence organisations. The schemes that we have seen to deal with the problem appear to be quite inadequate. We have no particular solution of our own to suggest, except that the efficient Pioneer formations which have been recruited should be put to work to improve some of the roads of the Province. A list of the roads, the improvement of which is urgently called for in the interests of the better distribution of supplies, has, we understand, been furnished to Government. We fully realise that this only touches the fringe of the problem, which we commend to Government's earnest and immediate attention.

A. ROWLANDS,
Chairman.

H. M. HOOD,
R. L. WALKER,
M. A. MOMIN,
D. M. BHATTACHARYYA,
Members.

N. BALIOL SCOTT,
Associate Member.

J. L. LLEWELLYN,
Secretary.

March 30, 1945.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

[*The figures in brackets refer to paragraphs.*]

Chapter III

THE MACHINE—STRUCTURE (*a*) AT HEADQUARTERS.

A.—Structure of the Headquarter Machine as a whole. [17-45]

1. The portfolios of Government should be redistributed as follows, in order to secure a better grouping of functions, particularly with reference to common objectives: [45]

(1) Chief Minister's Department.
(2) Communications, Transport and Buildings.
(3) River Utilisation.
(4) Land Improvement and Agriculture.
(5) Finance and Revenue.
(6) Public Health and Medical.
(7) Education.
(8) Commerce, Labour and Industries.
(9) Local Self-Government, Co-operation, Agricultural Credit, Rural Indebtedness and Relief.
(10) Judicial and Legislative.
(11) Home.
(12) Civil Supplies.
(13) Land Reform.

2. The present distribution of business should be modified as follows:—

(*a*) The Chief Minister should become the co-ordinator (*i*) of the machinery of Government in general, and (*ii*) subject to the Cabinet, of the policies and activities of the Development Departments. [26-27]

(*b*) In his first capacity, the Chief Minister should include in his office: [157]

(*i*) The new Organisation and Methods Division (responsible for working out the structure and procedures of the Government machine).

(*ii*) Establishments General (the staffing of the machine, conditions of service, etc., including the present Audit Branch responsibility for fixing standard prices and rates of supply for all goods and services common to most Departments.)

(*iii*) General Administration (personal management for General Administration cadres, including Home Department (Appointments Branch) and expenditure under Vote—Head 25.

(*iv*) Common Services, i.e., the operation of those services required by all Departments, e.g., Land Acquisition, Publicity which should disappear as a separate portfolio, Supply of Furniture and Stationery, etc.

(*c*) The Board of Revenue should be responsible for all revenue, therefore:

(*i*) Excise should be transferred to the Board. [30 & 153]

(*ii*) Sales Tax and Agricultural Income Tax should be transferred to the Board. [31 & 153]

(*d*) Finance and Revenue should be combined into a single portfolio. [33]

(*e*) Revenue Department should be abolished and its functions transferred elsewhere, principally to the Board of Revenue (e.g., Collection), to Chief Minister's office (e.g., allotment of funds for General Administration), to Ministry of Agriculture (e.g., Tank Development Act) and to the Ministry of Co-operation, Credit and Local Self-Government (e.g., Loans). [32]

(*f*) The new River Utilisation Portfolio should embrace: [34]

(*i*) The prevention of floods.

(*ii*) The provision of Hydro-Electric Power.

(*iii*) The provision of navigable waterways.

(*iv*) The irrigation of agricultural lands.

(*g*) The new Portfolio of Communications, Transport and Buildings should include the present Communications and Buildings Branch of the Communications and Works Department and the Transport functions of the Home Department. [35]

(*h*) The Ministry of Agriculture should:

(*i*) Have as its principal objective the securing of increased productivity from the soil:

Therefore the Agricultural Development Department should be abolished.

(*ii*) Regard the land as producing crop yields rather than revenue:

Therefore money should not be withheld from schemes, otherwise sound and beneficial, merely because they will not produce an adequate *direct* return on the capital outlay.

(*iii*) Determine the optimum utilisation of land:

Therefore Forests should be included in the Agriculture Portfolio. [30-36]

(*i*) Education and Public Health should each be separate Portfolios, but could be combined, if in future the number of Portfolios should be reduced. [37-39]

(j) Registration should be transferred to the Judicial and Legislative Portfolio.

(k) A new Portfolio should be created to include Local Self-Government, Co-operation, Rural Credit and Indebtedness, and (from Revenue) all Loans and Famine Relief. [38]

(l) A new Portfolio for Land Reform should be created to implement the recommendations of the Floud Commission; if advisable it could later take over the Land Records and Surveys Department. [44]

B.—Structure of Headquarter Machine for Development. [47-61]

3. A Cabinet Committee, of which the Chief Minister should in his second capacity [*see* 2(*a*) (*ii*)] be Chairman, should be set up to co-ordinate the development of the physical and human resources of the Province, and to examine questions of development policies and priorities. [48]

4. The Chief Minister and the Cabinet Development Committee should be assisted by a Development Board, consisting of the Secretaries of the Development Departments, together with the Secretary of the Finance Department. [49]

The functions of the Development Board should be:

(*a*) To prepare for consideration of the Cabinet Development Committee an integrated provincial Development Plan by endorsing, modifying or adjusting the plans of each individual Department, or by putting forward proposals initiated by itself.

(*b*) To transform the functional plans of each Department into a Territorial Plan for each District.

(*c*) To control the progress of each District Plan. [50]

5. The Development Board:

(*a*) Should be a Planning Body. [53]

(*b*) Should set up Standing Committees to consider questions where certain Departments are intimately and regularly concerned. [55]

(*c*) Should have a full-time Secretary. [49]

(*d*) Should set up a Technical Inter-departmental Committee under the Chairmanship of the Development Board Secretary, for discussion between technical heads before consideration by the Development Board. [56]

(*e*) Should be assisted by full-time experts to provide a specialist viewpoint, e.g., Scientific Adviser, Economic Adviser, Engineering Adviser, Statistical Adviser. [54]

6. There should be Advisory Bodies, attached to individual Departments, and not to the Development Board, representative of

both the wishes of the people whom the Development Departments serve and of expert knowledge in the fields of activity covered by these Departments. [58]

7. The Civil Service Head of the Chief Minister's Department should be the Chief Secretary, and as such should be:

(*a*) Secretary to Cabinet, and to the Cabinet Development Committee. [59]
(*b*) Chairman of the Development Board. [49-53]
(*c*) The immediate executive superior of each District Officer. [53]
(*d*) Assisted by an Additional Secretary for the work specified in recommendation 2(*b*). [59]

Chapter IV

THE MACHINE—STRUCTURE (*b*) IN THE DISTRICTS.

A.—Structure of District Machine for Development. [62-88]

8. (*a*) All District Development activities should be co-ordinated under a single administrative head (The District Officer). [67]

(*b*) The District Officer should work out a detailed plan for "combined operations" in his District deciding—

what is to be done,
where it is to be done,
when it is to be done,
when it is to be finished,

and report progress to the Chief Secretary. [73]

(*c*) The District Officer should call in to assist him in this:
(*i*) heads of District Technical Departments.
(*ii*) His own staff (including his Subdivisional Officers).
(*iii*) Local authorities. [72]

(*d*) Heads of District Technical Departments should be the direct subordinates of the District Officer for what they are to do and for actually getting it done; they should correspond direct with their Headquarters Departments as regards internal administration and technical methods. [76-77]

9. Circle Officers should:

(*a*) Be increased to one per Thana. [83]
(*b*) Make a Circle Development Plan. [83]
(*c*) Supervise Union Boards. [83]
(*d*) Promote all aspects of Rural Reconstruction. [83]

10. Union Boards should be:

(*a*) Strengthened so as to become the basic unit of administration in the Province. [86]

(*b*) Provided with a full-time Government-paid clerk. [86]

(*c*) Organised so that individual members may specialise in one or other of Government's activities. [86]

B.—STRUCTURE OF DISTRICT MACHINE AS A WHOLE. [89-103]

11. The existing District Officer should become the Head of Government in his District as a first step in the proposed reorganisation, though it will be necessary sooner or later to "hive off" development activities from those of law and order, etc. [69]

12. (*a*) Each District Office should be organised into five groups:

(*i*) Law and Order.

(*ii*) Collection of all Revenue.

(*iii*) Development.

(*iv*) Civil Supplies.

(*v*) Service, i.e., activities carried out on behalf of any Department of Government (e.g., Information) or on behalf of the other sections of the District Office (e.g., Treasury). [93]

(*b*) Each group should normally be in charge of a separate officer directly responsible to the District Officer for the efficient administration of his group of activities. [94]

13. The District Officer's burden should be lightened in every other possible way:

(*a*) (*i*) Each District Officer should have two confidential clerks as his personal staff. [98]

(*ii*) One of our members recommends that a Gazetted Officer be attached to each District Officer as a Personal Assistant.

(*b*) Sadar Subdivision should be treated as quite distinct from District Headquarters and should be operated and staffed separately, like an outlying subdivision. [100]

(*c*) The rules relating to the scrutiny of Accounts and Returns and the monthly count of the Treasury should be amended. [101]

(*d*) Appeals in second and third class cases should be transferred to the Judiciary. [102*a*]

(*e*) The District Officer should relinquish the post of Registrar; Registration should be operated as a technical department. [102*b*]

(*f*) The District Officer should have greater delegated authority in small financial and establishment matters. [103]

Size of Districts [104-105]

14. Districts should be subdivided as recommended by the 1913-14 Bengal District Administration Committee and the size of the 24-Parganas should be reduced. [104-112]

The 24-Parganas Sunderbans [106-112]

15. (*a*) A Special Officer should be appointed under District Magistrate, 24-Parganas, charged with responsibility for—

(*i*) preparation of proposals for dividing the larger thanas,

(*ii*) establishment of hospitals and dispensaries,

(*iii*) formulation of schemes for the further improvement of the area,

(*iv*) speedy acquisition of the interests of the rent receivers. [111]

(*b*) Subsisting interests of all rent-receivers should be acquired by the State. [111]

(*c*) Comprehensive plans for the drainage of the water-logged area south-east of Calcutta should be prepared and the work put in hand at an early date. [112]

Commissioners [113-122]

16. The post of "Commissioner" should be abolished; [113] Commissioner's present functions should be redistributed as follows:—

(*a*) Statutory administrative duties to the Board of Revenue or Collector.

(*b*) Appellate functions to the Collector (except on appeal against his own first instance decision).

(*c*) Supervision of Municipalities and District Boards to a new Inspectorate of Local Bodies.

(*d*) Inspection of District Offices to Organisation and Methods Division. [116-122]

Crop Statistics [123-130]

17. Crop Statistics should in future be collected on the following basis:—

(*i*) Plot-to-plot enumeration should be abandoned.

(*ii*) Acreage survey should continue for another two years under the random sampling technique of the Indian Statistical Institute (one member dissenting).

(*iii*) Thereafter the acreage under crops need only be calculated systematically at intervals of five or ten years.

(*iv*) The yield per acre should continue to be calculated yearly by random sampling surveys. [130]

Jute Regulation [131]

18. (*a*) Primary Licensing Authorities should be retained for Jute Regulation under the direction of Circle Officers and utilised by them in their spare time as Development Assistants.

(*b*) Posts of Jute Inspectors and Assistant Inspectors should be abolished.

Chapter V

THE MACHINE AT HEADQUARTERS—THE STRUCTURE OF A COMPONENT UNIT.

Ministries and Departments [135-144]

19. Departments and Subordinate Offices should in future be known respectively as "Ministries" and "Departments": [135-136]

(*i*) The Ministry should be primarily responsible for policy and the Department for carrying the policy into effect.

(*ii*) Nothing should be referred to a Ministry to which they are not in a position to contribute anything except delay.

(*iii*) The Ministry should undertake common services for the Departments attached to it.

(*iv*) The Head of a Department should, subject to the rules governing the conditions of service and discipline of civil servants generally, be given the fullest practicable control over the staff under him.

Statutes and Rules [145]

20. (*a*) The general aim should be to confer upon Heads of Departments the maximum amount of delegated authority, other than in the policy field.

(*b*) To achieve this end, legislation may be necessary; if such legislation is likely to be delayed, Heads of Departments might, if there be no legal or political objections, be made "Secretaries to Government". [145]

Chapter VI

THE MACHINE—SOME OF ITS HEADQUARTERS' COMPONENTS.

Revenue Department [149]

21. (*i*) All functions relating to revenue and the administration of Statutes dealing with revenue questions should be handled by the expanded Board of Revenue.

(*ii*) The Office of the Chief Minister should take over from the Revenue Department such functions as those of Land Acquisition, determination of boundaries, provision of office and residential

Chapter VII

MANNING THE MACHINE.

Personnel Management [199-218]

27. (*a*) To secure greater continuity, knowledge and experience, I.C.S. officers who are selected should remain in the Secretariat from the 15th year of their service onwards. [201-203]

(*b*) To secure greater continuity, knowledge and experience, B.C.S. officers who are selected should remain in the Secretariat from the 15th year of their service onwards. [204]

(*c*) To ensure recruits of suitable calibre for the higher technical services, a percentage of the vacancies in these services should be reserved for direct recruits. [206]

(*d*) As a temporary measure some higher technical posts should be filled by officers on contract for limited periods. [207]

(*e*) Direct recruitment to the upper division of the clerical staff in the Secretariat should be abolished. [210]

(*f*) All highly technical posts should be filled by the best men available, irrespective of caste or creed. [211-212]

(*g*) The ambiguity regarding the phrase "minimum qualifications" should be cleared up. [213-214]

(*h*) To ensure that efficiency is maintained—

(*i*) Increments should only be granted if the officer's record during the previous year has been satisfactory. [215]

(*ii*) No officer should cross the efficiency bar unless his superior has definitely certified that the officer is fit to do so. [216]

(*iii*) Those who are persistently inefficient should either be dismissed from service, or compulsorily retired. [217]

(*i*) To protect Ministers and to allay the apprehensions of the services. Ministers should have no concern with postings below a certain level. [220 and 255]

(*j*) The Government Servants Conduct Rules should be amended to make it an offence for a Government officer to seek a personal advantage from a Minister. [221].

(*k*) To ensure that officials adopt a correct attitude to the public, it should be impressed upon them that they are the servants and not the masters of the public. [222]

Bribery and Corruption [223-229]

28. The following administrative measures are suggested:—

(*a*) Greatest care should be taken in selecting officers authorised to grant permits, and rules relating to such permits should be drawn up with the greatest precision. [228]

(b) Frequent and thorough inspection should be made by head of offices employing staff engaged on duties likely to expose them to temptation. [228]

(c) Resolute action should be taken when suspicion aroused. [228]

(d) Public servants should report offers of illegal gratification. [228]

(e) Public servant convicted of corrupt practice should be dismissed, without question of gratuity either for himself or for his family. [228]

29. The following legal remedies should be introduced:—

(a) Offences under sections 161 and 165, I.P.C., should be made cognisable.

(b) Section 162, Cr.P.C., should be amended to permit of the use of statements made in the presence of the police, in trials under sections 161 and 165, I.P.C.

(c) Law should be amended so that the onus of proving the innocence of the passing of money between a public servant and a member of the public with whom he is in official relations shall be on the public servant and the party concerned.

(d) A new offence should be created; namely, that if a public servant or his dependants have become possessed of a sudden accretion of wealth, the public servant concerned would be deemed guilty of an offence, unless he could prove that the accretion of wealth was innocently obtained. [229]

(e) If legislation on the lines indicated is likely to be delayed, application should be made for action under Ordinance or a Defence of India Rule. [230]

30. To protect public servants from false prosecutions:

(a) The public servant's superior should be informed, confidentially if needs be, within twenty-four hours of the starting of investigations under section 161 or 165, I.P.C.

(b) Government's permission should be secured before actually lodging a prosecution in the courts against a public servant. [231]

Training [234-240]

31. (a) The initial training of an officer should include his responsibilities in the development field. [234]

(b) Officers who become Secretaries to Ministries concerned with technical activities of which they have had little experience should spend say three months in the technical department attached to the Ministry. [235]

(*c*) Non-technical officers whose work covers technical fields (e.g., a Circle Officer) should take short technical course at approved institutions. [236]

(*d*) Special courses should be arranged for the general training of those officers already in service, whose training has been interrupted, or not taken place, owing to the war. [237]

(*e*) Technical officers should be instructed in matters of general administration, and also in how to "put their activities across." [238]

(*f*) Selected technical officers in the higher services should be given study leave more frequently than in the past, such leave being definitely correlated with their work. [239]

(*g*) There should be a course for clerical staff, which should be taken before the clerk enters the office. [240]

(*h*) One of the first tasks of the Establishment Division should be to arrange the above courses, both at Headquarters and in the districts. [240]

The Public Service Commission

32. (*a*) Regulation 31A should be cancelled and recruitment of Sub-Registrars should be brought within the purview of the Commission. [245]

(*b*) All direct appointments to any service or post the initial pay of which is at present Rs.75 per month or above should be brought within the Commission's purview. [245]

(*c*) When a substantive vacancy in a permanent post is foreseen Commission should be consulted *well in advance*.

(*d*) Commission need not be consulted in the filling of leave or deputation vacancies the term of which is not likely to exceed nine months.

(*e*) Commission should be consulted regarding the appointment to a temporary post of a person having a lien on a permanent post when such appointment is in effect a promotion from one service to another and the term of the post is likely to last more than six months.

(*f*) The Commission should be consulted in matters of promotion—

(*i*) from a subordinate service to a provincial service.

(*ii*) from one provincial service to another. [252]

(*g*) Within the Bengal General Service, which contains a number of embryonic services, the Public Service Commission should be consulted when promotions are to the post of a head of a Department. [253]

(*h*) To ensure proper appreciation of the relative merits of different officers, there should be a great improvement in the conduct

rolls. Establishment Division should devise a standard form. [254]

(*i*) The Commission should not ordinarily be asked to suggest the names of more candidates than there are vacancies. [256]

(*j*) Establishment Division would advise Departments on the conduct of proceedings, and would itself take charge of really important cases. [257]

(*k*) The Commission's Report should be published in *toto*. [260]

Chapter VIII

SPEEDING THE MACHINE.

Financial Control [266-278]

33. (*a*) There should be further delegation of financial authority: whenever possible the whole appropriation under a minor or sub-head of account should be placed at the disposal of a Head of a Department to disburse in accordance with principles laid down by the Ministry. [268]

(*b*) The maintenance of uniformity throughout the services in pay, allowances and conditions of service should in future be the concern of the Establishment Division of the Chief Minister's Office and not of Finance. [269]

(*c*) Where the annual appropriation under a particular head of a Ministry's budget is intended to meet the cost of a number of individual projects, each designed to implement the Ministry's policy, it should not be necessary to obtain the concurrence of Finance to each such individual project. [271]

(*d*) Wherever it can be done without loss of real financial control, the final responsibility for seeing both that each individual project is in accordance with the accepted policy of Government, and also that good value is received for the outlay involved, should be laid upon the individual Ministry concerned. [270]

(*e*) Each Ministry should be given power to sanction reappropriations within a grant without reference to Finance provided that:

(*i*) there is no risk of a grant as a whole being exceeded;

(*ii*) the expenditure to meet which the reappropriation is to be made is not such as to involve the undertaking of a new unapproved recurring liability;

(*iii*) the savings come to light in sufficient time to permit their being spent to good purpose and the expenditure is not incurred merely to prevent savings lapsing. [272]

(*f*) Whenever possible, each Ministry should, subject to similar conditions, delegate powers of reappropriation to Heads of Departments. [273]

(*g*) The whole question of financial delegation should be examined in detail by Finance and the Organisation and Methods Division of the Chief Minister's Department; in particular, e.g.:

(*i*) yardsticks should be prepared wherever practicable to measure the staff required in District Offices;

(*ii*) the employment of additional staff on this basis by the District Officer should not wait upon the formalities of obtaining additional budget provision; [275]

(*iii*) rules governing contingent expenditure should allow heads of offices some discretion in respect of—

(*a*) maximum prices, [277]

(*b*) rates of suply. [278]

Office Management [279-283]

34. (*a*) Duplicate noting in the Ministry and the Department should be abolished. In particular—

(*i*) The practice of communicating proposals from the Department to Ministry by letter should cease.

(*ii*) All matters requiring both departmental and ministerial consideration should be dealt with in special files.

(*iii*) Proposals from the Department should be as comprehensive as possible.

(*iv*) The Head of the Department should send the special file with his proposal to the Ministry where it should be dealt with initially by an officer who should indicate the action to be taken if he is unable to pass final orders immediately. [280]

(*b*) The Reference Section should be given greater importance; it should be better staffed and regarded as a stepping stone to promotion. [281]

Office Accommodation, Equipment and Communications [284-295]

35. (*a*) Government should prepare a programme for the modernisation and rebuilding where necessary of all Government offices in Bengal.

(*b*) The new buildings should be scientifically constructed, and properly furnished and equipped, to ensure the good health of the Government servants, and the prompt discharge of Government business. [284-290]

(*c*) There should be a more generous scale for the allotment of typewriters and far more telephones, the ultimate objective being at least "A telephone to every thana". There should be more extensions, and more inter-departmental connections. [291-293]

(*d*) Touring facilities should be improved, e.g.:

(*i*) Where the expense involved is likely to be justified by the consequential improvement in the administration, official transport should be provided on the "pool" system.

(*ii*) Each district headquarters should have a station wagon for local cartage and general official duties in the town.

(*iii*) Travelling allowances should be reviewed by the Establishment Division.

(*iv*) Where necessary Dak Bungalows should be restored. [294]

Hours of Work and length of Holidays [296-99]

36. (*a*) In Calcutta, all Government offices should start work by 10 a.m. [297]

(*b*) Government offices should be closed only on Act holidays. [299]

Landlords' Fees [300-304]

37. (*a*) Landlords' fees should be abolished. [303]

(*b*) Notices, if deemed necessary at all, should be served by registered post by the authority effecting the registration of the transfer. [304]

Collection of Government Dues [305-313]

38. (*a*) The Sunset Law (Act XI of 1859) should be amended to cover the realisation of arrear cesses of all kinds. [307]

(*b*) The Certificate Act should be so amended as to limit the ground upon which a certificate-debtor can deny liability to the sole ground that he has paid the amount. [308]

As a corollary, the Department seeking the certificate should inform the Certificate Officer that it has given due notice of the demand to the certificate-debtor, and has heard all objections. [309]

(*c*) Certificate proceedings should normally be started immediately the demand becomes an arrear. [310]

(*d*) Organisation and Methods Division should enquire whether the Certificate work or part thereof could be decentralised to the Circle Officer, without unduly burdening him, and without interfering with his other duties. [311-312]

(*e*) Certificates, once filed, should be followed up with the utmost resolution; far greater strictness in realising Government dues is necessary. [312-313]

Delays in the Criminal File [314-315]

39. (*a*) Additional lawyer magistrates and munsifs should be engaged to deal with congestion in criminal files. [314]

(*b*) Officers should specialise either in criminal or revenue work, and there should be day-to-day trials. [314-315]

(*c*) The possibility of dividing the B.C.S./B.J.C.S. into executive and judicial branches, as is now done with the I.C.S., should be considered. [315]

Chapter IX

CONDITIONS OF SERVICE.

Pay [316-319]

40. (*a*) No pay should be less than a living wage. [317]

(*b*) Pay and conditions of service should be such as to attract the right type of recruit, and thereafter to retain an efficient and contented staff.

(*c*) There should be substantially equal pay for comparable work. [317]

(*d*) Pay should be based on long term trends, and fluctuations should be met by temporary cuts or allowances. [317]

(*e*) Government should be in the forefront of good employers. [317]

(*f*) A reasonable career should be provided, and efforts made to avoid any "blind alley employment", e.g., a Secretariat typist should henceforth be eligible for Secretariat Lower Division. [318]

(*g*) The multitude of pay scales now in force should be reduced and simplified. [319]

Promotion [320-322]

41. (*a*) Promotion should be in the interests of the public service and not of the individual, and, save in the subordinate grades, where seniority should be given due weight, should be by merit. [320]

(*b*) Inequality of opportunity of promotion should be minimised—

(*i*) by planning ahead, and by transferring good men at an early stage to ensure that they will not be held up by blocks;

(*ii*) by recruiting for new activities from Ministries or Departments where promotion is slow. [321]

(*c*) Outstandingly good clerks at Headquarters and in District Offices should be considered for promotion to the B.C.S. and B.J.C.S. respectively. [322]

(*d*) The Office Superintendent in District Offices should be given gazetted status. [323]

Pension [324-327]

42. Government should consider the desirability of revising the pension rules on the lines of the modifications introduced in the United Kingdom in 1909. [327]

Temporary Clerks [328-334]

43. (*a*) The number of temporary clerks should be reduced to a minimum. [330]

(*b*) *In the districts*, the permanent establishment should be increased sufficiently to fill—

(*i*) the Chapman permanent "duty posts", modified by subsequent developments;

(*ii*) a "temporary posts" reserve;

(*iii*) a leave reserve for (*i*) and (*ii*).

In the Secretariat, there should be a "temporary posts" reserve, under the Establishment Division.

(*c*) Increments should ordinarily be allowed. [334]

(*d*) Continuous temporary service immediately preceding appointment to a permanent post should count for superannuation pension. [334]

Sub-Grade in District Offices [335-338]

44. The Sub-Grade should be abolished. [338]

Amalgamation of B.C.S. and B.J.C.S. [339-343]

45. The services should not be amalgamated [341] but [342], the following measures should be taken:—

(*a*) The strength of the two cadres should be refixed by upgrading the posts down-graded by Mr. Robertson.

(*b*) B.C.S. composition should be brought gradually to the point at which the number of direct recruits and promotees are equal; thereafter, each vacancy should be filled in such a way as to maintain this proportion.

Equalisation of prospects of Officers serving in Districts and in Secretariat [344-348]

46. **I.C.S.**—(*a*) Officers found suitable for Secretariat work will normally be retained in the Secretariat from their 15th year onwards.

(*b*) Prospects of District and Secretariat Officers should be made reasonably equivalent.

To effect this we recommend the abolition of the fixed pay attached to the post of Secretary to Government and the creation of a number of selection grade appointments. There should be a proportionate number of such selection grade appointments in the District cadre. [344-347]

47. **B.C.S.**—(*a*) Listed posts should be divided proportionately between the Districts and the Secretariat, the object being to provide approximately equal prospects over a long term of years. [348]

(*b*) A B.C.S. Officer, other than the holder of a listed post, when appointed a Deputy Secretary, should draw pay in the time-scale, Rs.900—50—1,150. [348]

(*c*) There should be a proportionate number of selection grade appointments on the same time-scale in the districts. [348]

(*d*) A B.C.S. Officer holding the post of Under Secretary should draw grade pay only. An officer promoted from the clerical ranks to the post of Under Secretary should become a member of the B.C.S. [348]

48. The present "drift to Calcutta" must be discouraged: [349] therefore—

(*a*) Residences of District Officers, and of other officers of comparable status should be provided with baths, wash basins and modern sanitation. [350]

(*b*) Every District Officer's residence should have a separate office room for his Confidential Assistant, and a reasonable waiting-room for his official visitors. [350]

(*c*) For every Class I residence, the compound of which is one acre or more, one *mali* should be provided at Government expense. [350]

(*d*) Existing transfer allowance rules should be examined by the Establishment Division, to ensure that the allowances cover the reasonable costs of an official's move to a new station. [351 & 354]

(*e*) Officers should not normally be transferred under three years. [352]

(*f*) Basic furniture should be provided in Government residences. [353]

(*g*) Provincial Services working in Calcutta should receive house allowance, on the lines of that enjoyed by the I.C.S. [355]

Chapter X

LOCAL SELF-GOVERNING BODIES.

Municipalities [357-381]

49. (*a*) History of all Municipalities with a population of under 20,000 should be examined, to see whether the Act should be withdrawn from the area, or whether amalgamation is possible and desirable. [358-360]

(*b*) The Municipalities comprised in the Industrial area around Calcutta should be amalgamated into groups. [361-363]

(*c*) Garden Reach, South Suburban and Tollygunge Municipalities should be incorporated within the Calcutta Corporation; or, in the alternative, the three municipalities should be amalgamated. [364-366]

(*d*) All Municipalities should have an Executive Officer, appointed by the Municipality in consultation with the Public Service Commission, half his salary being paid by the Municipality. and half by Government. [368-370]

(*e*) A small Inspectorate of Local Bodies should be established under the new Ministry of Local Self-Government. [371-372]

(*f*) All Commissioners should be elected, and the system of nomination should be abolished. [373]

(*i*) Industrial and minority constituencies may be created where needed. [373]

(*ii*) Local officials should have the right to attend meetings of the Municipality whenever matters of importance relating to their special subject come up for discussion. They would have no right to vote. [373]

(*g*) The District Officer should be vested with powers of the Divisional Commissioner, and with certain powers now exercised by Government in respect of audit objections. [374]

(*h*) Government should not hesitate to use its powers of supersession in cases of persistent incompetence. [375]

(*i*) A Provincial Town and Country Planning Act should be passed. [376-378]

(*j*) The Calcutta Improvement Trust Act should be strengthened and its jurisdiction extended if necessary. [378]

(*k*)(*i*) Revenue functions of the Collector of 24-Parganas within the limits of the Calcutta Corporation to be exercised by the Collector of Calcutta. [379-380]

(*ii*) Magisterial functions of the District Magistrate of the 24-Parganas within the limits of the Calcutta Corporation to be exercised by the Chief Presidency Magistrate. [379-380]

District Boards

50. (*a*) If the District Boards become *functus officio*, a District Advisory Board should be set up in their place, its members elected as are members of the District School Board. [385-386]

(*b*) If the District Boards are relieved of only part of their present functions, the question of returning to them the management of Primary Education might be considered. [387]

(*c*) If Government proceeds no further with "provincialisation", the Boards should be strengthened. [388]

(*d*) Nominations should be abolished, but special minority constituencies should be created where necessary. [389]

(*e*) Local officials should attend meetings whenever matters of importance relating to their special subjects come up for discussion. They will have no vote. [389]

(*f*) There should be a Local Self-Government Advisory Committee, to enable Government to keep in touch with District Boards. Hon'ble Minister, Local Self-Government, should be *ex-officio* Chairman, and Secretary, Local Self-Government, *ex-officio* Secretary, with three representatives of the District Board Association as members, meeting at regular intervals or in emergencies. [391]

(*g*) District Boards should be classified into three groups, according to population and income. The salaries of the—

District Engineer,

District Health Officer,

Secretary,

Accountant,

will vary with the classification of the Boards, half being paid by Government, and half by the Boards themselves. [392]

The selection of the officers should be made in consultation with the Public Service Commission, and they should not be removable without the consent of Government. [392]

(*h*) District Boards should be inspected by the Inspectorate of Local Bodies. [393]

(*i*) Resources of District Boards must be increased. [394]

Union Boards

51. (*a*) Boards have suffered in the past through a lack of supervision and guidance, and to overcome this defect, a Circle Officer is recommended for every thana. [398]

(*b*) Union Board boundaries should only be altered when the Board is manifestly too unwieldy for proper administration. [400]

(*c*) Nominations to Union Boards should be abolished. [401]

If possible, there should be a secret ballot. [401]

(*d*) A full-time Government-paid local man should be appointed as clerk to every Union Board, who will be appointed and if necessary dismissed by the Subdivisional Officer. [402]

(*e*) The Blandy Committee's recommendations regarding the numbers of chowkidars and their pay should be implemented. [403]

(*f*) The maximum rate should be increased from Rs.84 to Rs.200. [404]

(*g*) The Union Food and Development Committees should be abolished. [404-405]

Chapter XI

CONCLUSION.

Implementation of Reports [409-411]

52. Senior Special Officer should be appointed to secure Cabinet's orders on Committee's Recommendations, and to ensure the implementation of Cabinet's decisions. [411]

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